

COMMUNITY LEARNING:
THE OUTCOMES REPORT

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**A RESEARCH REPORT PREPARED FOR
THE VICTORIAN TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION BOARD**

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RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the TAFE Board note the Report, Community Learning: The Outcomes Report, and its findings which identify the special role of Community Providers in the TAFE system in terms of:
 - providing vocational preparation, including the development of transferrable skills
 - providing preparation for further education
 - providing education for women
 - providing basic education
 - providing opportunities for participation in provider management and program support activities
 - their ability to respond promptly and appropriately to perceived community needs
 - providing courses on flexible, negotiable terms at accessible costs, venues and times
 - facilitating personal development
 - facilitating the development of skills helpful to the home and family
 - facilitating the development of skills conducive to the productive use of leisure time
 - facilitating the development of skills helpful to community involvement.

2. That in future development of courses across the TAFE system, personal development and transferrable skills constitute an integral part of curricula.

3. That the Eastern Metropolitan Regional TAFE Board forward the Report to the following:

a) The Victorian TAFE Board

b) State Government

The Department of Premier and Cabinet

- Social Justice Strategy Unit
- Community Services Branch
- Women's Policy Co-ordination Unit
- Victorian Women's Consultative Council

Community Services Victoria

The Department of Labour

The Department of Agriculture
- Office of Rural Affairs

Local Government Department

Office of Corrections
- Community Based Corrections

c) Commonwealth Government

The Department of Education and Youth Affairs

- Commonwealth Schools Commission
- Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission

Commission for the Future
- The Department of Science

The Department of Community Services

4. That the TAFE Board ensure that the allocation of resources to Community Providers is sufficient to enable them to extend their provision of educational and vocational opportunity.
5. That all relevant TAFE Policy, publicity and information affirm the importance of Community Providers as an integral part of TAFE provision.
6. That the TAFE Board notify the system of the release of the Report.

SUMMARY and CONCLUSIONS

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1 This Project documents educational and vocational outcomes of attendance at a Community Provider in the current social, political and educational climate. In establishing that 38% of Community Provider enrollees in this survey proceeded to further education participation and 33% who were not in the paid workforce in 1983, subsequently gained employment, it clearly demonstrates the role of Community Providers in implementing both the Victorian Government's Social Justice Policy and TAFE's policy on education and training.

The research addressed, for the Eastern Metropolitan Region of TAFE, many of the questions raised in It's Human Nature (Johnson and Hinton 1986). Evidence is presented about the population of Community Providers; their age, sex, marital status, numbers of children, ethnic background and education level. The report describes their mode of participation at Community Providers, the reasons they chose to attend and the contributions they made to management and program maintenance. It documents the outcomes of their attendance both in terms of their own perceptions and in terms of their participation in further education programs and in the paid workforce. Clearly identified also is what participants at a Community Provider value most highly about their learning experiences.

Outcomes in Relation to Community Providers' Philosophy and Operational Style

The data documented by this Project confirms conclusions drawn in the recent report, Community Learning: A Public Investment (Benson and Saleeba 1984). In relation to this Report it indicates the value to participants of what Community Providers offer to education. In particular it shows that:

- 2.
1. In providing an integrated approach to education and human development, Community Providers encourage the development of skills and understanding applicable to many aspects of participants' lives, skills which enable people to function more proficiently at home, in the community, at work and at play.
 2. The self-management styles and processes integral to Community Provider operations have opened up additional learning opportunities. Participants in Community Providers are not just enrolled in programs. Many take the opportunity, which Community Providers always keep open to them, to become involved in the management of their centres in a variety of ways. This research documents the acquisition of skills such involvement promotes. It also points to the participatory nature of Community Provider operations which are underpinned by the philosophy that participation and knowledge promote people's empowerment.
 3. Participants at Community Providers are predominantly women who have not completed secondary education. As these research findings confirm, Community Providers have a high success rate in encouraging and enabling them to return to education.

Outcomes and Enrichment Programs

The research revealed that Community Providers offer a very diverse range of programs, the majority of which are classified as Enrichment in the TAFE system. These programs accounted for about three quarters of enrolments of respondents to the questionnaire. The purposes of the research required a different analysis of the types of programs provided. Using as a base Benson and Saleeba's preferred term 'Community Learning' rather than 'Enrichment', a new classification was constructed as described earlier in this Report. Analysis of enrolments according to this classification system, together with analysis of outcomes of attendance at a Community Provider, provides strong evidence in support of Benson and Saleeba's claims that 'Enrichment' programs have been successful in:

- a) providing access for the educationally disadvantaged
- b) providing the major form of access for women
- c) providing the major form of access for the over 30 age group
- d) developing life skills
- e) responding to leisure needs
- f) leading to job creation and self employment opportunities
- g) developing self-esteem
- h) breaking down social isolation
- i) developing competent citizens able to respond to the changing society and to participate effectively in family and community life
- j) leading to participation in the paid workforce and improvement of job status

Outcomes and Personal Development

The high value placed on personal growth/development as an outcome of attendance at a Community Provider is clearly indicated by this research. Not only did 76% of the respondents to the questionnaire rate it as important but 38.7% rated this as the most important opportunity for development afforded them by Community Providers.

In TAFE's classification of courses into Streams, it is probably programs under the heading of Personal Development which fit least easily. In the TAFE system, personal development courses are classified as Enrichment and therefore attract little in the way of resources or funding. Yet personal development, it could be argued, is essential to vocational and educational success. Certainly industry considers it so, given the large amounts of money it is prepared to expend on staff development. TAFE would seem to agree.

Staff development receives a special allocation of resources throughout the system (Refer Focus '92), yet TAFE appears to consider this aspect of educational and vocational development outside its brief to offer vocational education and training. Most of its course provision is job specific and little if any attention is paid to personal and interpersonal skills education and training.

In a complex and rapidly changing society, confidence, self-esteem and interpersonal capabilities are the transferrable skills probably most advantageous to learners and workers, especially those who have been isolated, alienated or disadvantaged by our society.

(Coates 1984) This is a problem for the TAFE system as a whole to confront. Curricula which addresses these needs is relatively new and few teachers are even trained in this area. However, Community Providers have been especially successful in fostering the development of transferrable vocational skills thereby increasing the awareness and understanding necessary for the setting and achievement of personal goals both educational and vocational.

Outcomes in Relation to Government Policy

The Research has also demonstrated the effectiveness of Community Providers in responding to Government policy in a range of ways. The Community Providers' contribution to the implementation of the Social Justice Policy is demonstrated by their role in improving access to education places, especially for women. In 1984 in the Eastern Region, 51% of women and 8% of men enrolling in TAFE programs did so through courses offered at a Community Provider.

As is evidenced also by the Case Studies included in this report, Community Providers are committed to combatting the inequalities inherent in our society. Through their education, social justice and community development activities they enable greater access to economic resources and expanded opportunities for participation in the decision-making that affects people's lives.

They contribute to greater equality of rights and of access to goods and services by encouraging the development of knowledge and understanding of the processes by which our society functions.

In particular, the outcomes documented by this research demonstrate the role of Community Providers in improving access to education places, especially for women, and in catering positively for extended non-earners.

Outcomes in Relation to TAFE Policy

In their capacity as TAFE Providers, Community Providers have been shown to increase the effectiveness of the TAFE system to respond to Government Policy and initiatives. Moreover they make a substantial contribution to enabling TAFE to attain its aims and objectives.

1. Community Providers provide 'easy access' to TAFE. In particular they enable TAFE to respond promptly and accurately to the community by offering programs co-operatively designed to meet the community's expressed needs in a congenial environment conducive to education development.
2. Community Providers contribute to a greater breadth of TAFE provision. They extend the range of courses offered and provide a different mode of delivery; smaller groups in a non-institutional environment underpinned by a different philosophy of education.

As a result of these factors, different people from different social and economic backgrounds, especially women, gain access to TAFE. Community Providers thereby enable the system to attract a wider cross-section of the community.

The Community Providers' role in assisting TAFE to achieve its aims and objectives is demonstrated also by the outcomes of Community Provider attendance. As the findings of this research indicate, participants are educationally enabled. Almost one third of 1983 Community Provider enrolees in this survey proceeded to further education courses at Universities, Colleges of Advanced Education and TAFE Colleges.

In addition, 64.9% enrolees indicated that Community Providers had assisted them in developing communication skills, 45.7% counselling skills and over 90% felt that Community Providers had played an important role in their personal development.

Within its broad statement of aims and objectives, TAFE emphasises the priority of its commitment to vocational education. In this respect too, Community Providers are shown to be effective. The classification of programs constructed by this research indicates that 83% have direct or indirect vocational relevance. Ultimately this relevance is dependent upon the purposes of the user rather than on the purpose of the program or the provider.

At the end of the section on relevant policies it was stated that:

On the face of it there seems to be harmony between TAFE's Aims and Objectives Statement referred to above, and Community Providers' aims and objectives.

In practice, however, there is a difference of emphasis which is probably more apparent when expressed as desired outcomes than it is when expressed as aims and objectives.

This is borne out by this documentation of outcomes, many of which are not included as objectives in the preparation of College based courses which constitute the bulk of TAFE provision. While such courses function within the parameters of the TAFE Aims and Objectives Statement, they often limit their objectives to satisfying those objectives concerned only with job specific training.

Those other aspects which appear to enjoy equal emphasis in statements of aims and objectives are more obviously met by the objectives and outcomes of Community Provider education.

The Community Providers' unique contribution is effective in helping to create the balance that the aims suggest and therefore helps to ensure that TAFE's provision of post-secondary education and training is accessible, does enable individuals to obtain qualifications, knowledge and skills for vocational and personal development purposes, and does develop and provide a wide range of programs relevant to identified needs.

INTRODUCTION

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The Project to investigate 'Educational and Vocational Outcomes of Attendance at a Community Provider in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of TAFE' was set up under TAFE Designated Grant funding in 1985 by the Eastern Metropolitan Regional TAFE Board.

Essentially there were two major motivations for the Project.

1. There had been no previous attempt to document any of the outcomes of community based provision of education.
2. Community Learning: A Public Investment, a report on the scope of community based education provision in Victoria, was prepared for the TAFE Board and presented in 1984. It raised a number of important issues in relation to the outcomes of attendance at a Community Provider.

Community learning groups, now classified by TAFE as Community Providers of TAFE programs, were initiated by their communities and developed in response to expressed community needs. While the encouragement of learning has always been a major focus, community development and the quest for social justice were, and still are, essential facets of their aims.

Although the first centres, most of which are now registered as Community Providers by the TAFE system, had been set up in the early 1970's, and the community education movement quickly gained momentum, there were still relatively few such centres in Victoria in comparison with the number established in the 1980's. In 1976 there were twelve centres in metropolitan Melbourne whereas in 1986, in the Eastern Metropolitan Region alone, there are more than eighty groups, forty-three of which are registered with TAFE for the provision of TAFE programs. new
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Devolution of responsibility and control from central agencies to the community has been a marked movement in the eighties across a wide range of services including welfare, health and education, reflecting as it does, a major thrust of government policy.

Since the beginning of the eighties, increased TAFE support and the establishment of Regional TAFE Boards have been important factors in the development of community based provision of TAFE courses. As an avenue of mutual access, TAFE to the community and the community to TAFE, Community Providers have now become an integral part of TAFE provision.

In response to these developments there is increased interest in what is being achieved. Both TAFE and Community Providers themselves have been keen to examine these achievements.

This Project is a response to these issues. It seeks to offer an analysis and a description of the outcomes of community based provision of education.

Specifically it examines a sample of people who attended a Community Provider in 1983 in order to document some of the outcomes of their attendance.

THE PROJECT BRIEF

The guidelines issued for this Project made a number of points and raised a number of issues for consideration. They suggested that Community Providers' activities and orientations reflect local demand. However, all share the aim of providing access to education, especially to women and to the socially isolated.

While participation rates can be determined through annual statistical returns, the reasons given by participants for attendance at a Community Provider and the outcomes of attendance are largely unknown.

Community Providers may be divided in groups which share certain definable characteristics.

1. Size

The size of a Community Provider, for the purposes of this Project, is calculated according to the annual number of participants enrolled in a course or program.

2. TAFE Category

- a) Category A3 (LAC)
- b) Category C
- c) Category E

3. Primary Focus of Activities

- a) Preparatory
- b) Enrichment

It is suggested that, in the light of this classification, there may be identifiable differences between groups of Providers with regard to:

- a) reason for attendance
- b) outcomes of attendance.

The guidelines also proposed a review of the literature relevant to the outcomes of attendance at a Community Provider.

The purpose of the Project is to identify and document these issues.

It was considered desirable that the research be conducted in consultation with Community Providers.

AIMS OF RESEARCH

While the overall aim of this Research Project is to investigate the educational and vocational outcomes of attendance at a Community Provider in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of TAFE, its specific concern is to document, by analysis and description, the educational and vocational outcomes for a sample of the people who attended a Community Provider in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of TAFE in 1983.

There were three main thrusts to the research:

1. To document where attendance at a Community Provider has led the participant in terms of employment in the workforce and enrolment in further education courses.
2. To document the acquisition of skills developed by attendance at a Community Provider which may be used for educational/vocational purposes.
3. To document participants' perceptions of their own educational and vocational development.

This research is unique in at least two respects:

1. There has been no previous research into the educational and vocational outcomes of community based education in Victoria.
2. The Project seeks to document outcomes of involvement in community education over a three year time span.

CONTEXT of the RESEARCH

LITERATURE SEARCH

A search of the literature revealed no available documented information about educational and vocational outcomes of attendance at a Community Provider.

However material does exist which is relevant to community based provision of education. This includes information pertaining to:

- social justice
- the operations and activities of Community Providers
- Community Providers' aims and objectives
- Community Providers' priorities
- the role of community based education within overall educational provision for adults
- the roles and aims of adult education
- participation in adult education
- the mature age student
- TAFE's roles and responsibilities in adult education
- TAFE's aims and objectives
- TAFE's future priorities and program planning
- Educational objectives - human resources v labour planning.

REVIEW OF PRESENT POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE RESEARCH

Social Justice Policy

In the present political climate of commitment to social justice, in which the Victorian Government is committed to bringing about a "systematic re-ordering of social priorities", providers of government funded education and training have a responsibility to reflect Government policy.

Social Justice: The Need for a Strategic Approach sets out the broad objectives of the Government's Social Justice Policy.

- . "to overcome unfairness caused by unequal access of economic resources and power
- . to guarantee equal legal, industrial and political rights
- . to ensure greater equality and access to essential goods and services, with particular attention to geographically related inequalities.
- . to ensure expanded opportunities for genuine participation by all Victorians in the decisions which govern their lives."

(CAIN 1986)

The Social Justice statement specifically refers to education and employment in terms directly relevant to TAFE provision.

- . "...when we move to increase participation rates in secondary and post-secondary education, we want to ensure that those groups currently under represented get improved access to those education places.

When we develop employment programs, we want to ensure that those who have been non-earners for extended periods, (e.g. women who have been rearing children), are not excluded but are positively catered for. (my emphasis)

(CAIN 1986)

All of these objectives impinge upon TAFE provision of education and training. They constitute issues for the TAFE Priority Review, presently being conducted, which:

"will consider the effectiveness of the TAFE system in responding to Government initiatives and recommend priorities for TAFE in line with Government policy."

(TAFE WORTH NOTING 8/5/86)

TAFE Policy on Education and Training

The continuing debate over TAFE aims, objectives and priorities was initiated by the TAFE Aims and Objectives Statement, 15th July 1985. In this Statement the following major aims are described.

Primary Aim

The primary aim of the TAFE Aims and Objectives Statement states:

"The aim of TAFE is to provide post-secondary education and training which are easily accessible and which enable individuals to obtain qualifications, knowledge and skills for vocational and/or personal development purposes."

In expansion of this aim it is asserted:

"TAFE in Victoria has a traditional role in vocational education but the last decade has reflected a strong growth in the Preparatory and Enrichment areas. Perhaps this growth has been an expression from the community of a growing awareness that TAFE must be broader in its provision than vocational education, and that the educational environment it provides is appropriate for a much wider cross section of the community than those simply concerned with vocational education which, it must be stated, will continue as TAFE's primary function."

Secondary Aims

Two secondary aims are described in the TAFE Aims and Objectives Statement.

- "1. To develop and provide a wide range of programs relevant to identified needs.
2. To provide the opportunity for individuals to overcome educational disadvantage."

A number of enabling objectives are detailed by TAFE as a guide to achievement of these Aims, together with a range of strategies toward their implementation. (See Appendix M).

Some issues which must inevitably arise in the context of this research relate to:

- a) The success of Community Providers in assisting TAFE to achieve its Aims and Objectives.
- b) How far the provision of TAFE programs aspect of Community Providers' operations reflect TAFE's Aims.
- c) Whether the strategies proposed are consistent with the philosophical and operational styles of Community Providers.

Community Provider Policy

While each Community provider has established its own unique Aims and Objectives Statement, nevertheless there is commonality of philosophy, attitude and goals. These pertain to a broad spectrum of social needs.

Central among these aims are:

- "To provide an integrated range of services for diverse needs of individuals and families under the direction and control of the community.
- To reflect and to service the expressed needs of the community.
- To empower people toward meeting social change toward a more just and equal society."

(ANLC Aims)

TAFE programs constitute only one facet of Community Providers' operations. Nevertheless, the importance of these programs is acknowledged and Community Providers in the Eastern Region are currently in the process of developing a policy which integrates relevant TAFE policy without contravening their own basic tenets. (Appendix K details the goals and program priorities agreed at a seminar for Community Providers held in March 1986).

On the face of it there seems to be harmony between TAFE's Aims and Objectives Statement referred to above, and Community Providers' aims and objectives. In practice, however, there is a difference of emphasis which is probably more apparent when expressed as desired outcomes than it is when expressed as aims and objectives.

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Educational Style and Community Providers

"Learning starts from and continues to be related to where people are at."

"The real topic of education is 'learning how to learn'."

(STEWART 1979)

If we take these two aphorisms, we have, in essence, the crux of what Community Providers believe that education is all about.

In Community Learning: A Public Investment it is stated:

"Community Learning Centres have a very broad view of learning and endeavour to provide whatever programs, experiences, etc. seem appropriate to the situation. In this area they are more in line with current thinking and research on adult learning (e.g. Salmon, Tough and also the Kangan's philosophy of lifelong learning). Hence, the organisers and the teachers have as much chance to learn as the students."

(BENSON and SALEEBA 1984)

Community Providers believe that "each experience, from leaving home to joining the Committee has an equal potential for learning and personal development. The process a person goes through is just as important as the program."

(BENSON and SALEEBA 1984)

In the same report, Benson and Saleeba describe Community Providers as having:

- "- integrated approach to human development, offering education, welfare, health, child care and community information and contact services.
- self-management styles and processes, which open up additional learning opportunities.
- successful track record in encouraging women, older adults and the under-educated to return to education."

Access

Access to higher education and to employment is not found as a specifically stated aim of Community Providers, either in their own Aims Statements or in the Aims of the Association of Neighbourhood Learning Centres. However, in their broad view of learning, Community Providers would see their aims as conducive to such access.

Access to TAFE

Certainly Community Providers regard as important their role of offering access to TAFE to many in the community who would not otherwise participate.

At present, for example, many barriers exist for women wanting access to TAFE. In Women's Access to TAFE in Victoria: a report for the TAFE Board, February 1983 (KINROSS 1983), an examination is made of the existence of such barriers at four different levels:

1. the individual level
2. the College or Provider level
3. the central administrative level, and
4. the community level.

The list of barriers is long and a summary here would hardly do justice. It is recommended that the report be read.

Much of this access to TAFE is offered by Community Providers in the form of Enrichment programs.

In Community Learning: A Public Investment a survey of Community Providers revealed the following information:

"Community Learning Groups have a primary focus on the Enrichment Stream, but are involved in all TAFE Streams:

Vocational	3.2%
Preparatory	11.4%
Enrichment	85.4%

Although predominantly Enrichment programs are provided, Community Learning Groups view the outcome of these programs in a much broader way.

- 76.9% claim that their students keep returning for further courses
- 31.8% claim that many students move on to more formal courses
- 23.1% claim that many students move on to more vocational study
- 24.1% claim that many students move on to either part-time or full-time employment "

As Benson and Saleeba point out in this report, students entering these Enrichment programs, the vast majority of whom are women, usually do not have the confidence even to desire higher education. In the congenial atmosphere of a Community Provider however, sufficient confidence can often be developed to participate in such education activities.

Benson and Saleeba argue that Enrichment programs should not be seen as peripheral but as an integral part of TAFE provision. Their importance lies, not only, or even perhaps primarily, in developing leisure activities but in their provision of access employment and to further and higher education and in their impact on personal development and improved mental health.

The first section of the report describes the contributions of Enrichment programs offered by Community Providers to achieving social justice and makes this recommendation.

"That the TAFE Board affirm the importance of Enrichment (Community Learning) programs:

- as a form of access for many people who have had negative experiences of education or low confidence in their learning capacities
- as the major form of access for women and the over 30 age group
- in developing life skills
- as TAFE's major tool for responding to changes in work and leisure, including leisure in its more unwelcome forms
- in leading to job creation and self-employment opportunities
- in developing self-esteem and breaking down social isolation, thus reducing calls on medical and social services
- in developing competent citizens able to respond to the changing society and to participate effectively in family and community life
- as an educational forum in which controversial issues can be studied

- in refining understanding, taste and judgement, and sharpening appreciation of quality, style and form
- in improving general knowledge and updating in complex and changing areas."

(BENSON and SALEEBA 1984)

Despite the evidence which gave rise to this recommendation, such programs are often marginalised in the TAFE system. They occupy a position of uncertainty in relation to allocation of resources. When resources are scarce such programs have been the first to receive funding cuts as Kinross points out. (KINROSS 1983). However, they offer fewest barriers to women's participation in TAFE.

It is interesting to note that in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of TAFE, 46.7% of the female enrolment in TAFE participated through a Community Provider. (See Appendix I).

Recently TAFE has made a greater commitment to the provision of programs by Community Providers. Despite a percentage cutback in TAFE funding, Community Providers received an increase of 53% for 1986 in the Eastern Region. However, the proportion of TAFE resources in this area is still very small. In 1984 in the Eastern Region, Community providers enrolled 32.4% of TAFE students despite the fact that this form of TAFE provision receives only 1% of TAFE funds. Of women enrolled in TAFE programs in the Region, 46.7% attended a Community Provider. (EASTERN METROPOLITAN REGIONAL TAFE BOARD 1986).

Access to Further Education

Although they offer no figures, in "The System and Adjustment" a report of a workshop of researchers held at Monash University in November 1980, Ian Burnard et al point to modes of access to tertiary study for those who are disadvantaged, in particular, the educationally disadvantaged.

"Many in the community assume that post-secondary study demands a level of intelligence that they do not possess. These people may come to realise their own abilities through attendance at access courses, such as Women's Access Programs, TAFE Retail Store programs, book discussion groups, TAFE Outreach programs, Way-In courses and Learning Centre courses such as Maths for Fun and English for Fun. After attending these courses entrants can gain further knowledge, confidence and skills by attending Return to Study courses, special Preparatory courses and/or HSC and TOP courses."

(BURNARD et al 1980)

Women, who are so often educationally disadvantaged, particularly benefit from such programs.

"In the special case of women, it should be noted that though the provision of TAFE Women's Access programs and support for the work of informed Learning Centres such as Mountain District Women's Co-operative,* and the Nunawading North Neighbourhood Centre,* and the Diamond Valley Learning Centre,* may seem far removed from mature age entry, women in the community have to overcome not only their own feelings of inadequacy but also strong community prejudices about the desirability of education for women at all, let alone higher education for wives and mothers."

(BURNARD et al 1980)

Better understanding of social, political and economic issues leading to a more aware electorate and society generally is echoed by DR. Graham Allen writing in Education Victoria Vol. 1 No. 4 29/5/86.

"...research undertaken by the Higher Education Advisory and Research Unit at Monash University shows that participation of mature age students in higher education results, among other things, in large increases in communication skills, academic ability and leadership skills as well as academic interests and self-esteem together with a large decrease in dogmatism, particularly for early school leavers."

(ALLEN 1986)

* These Learning Centres are now registered as TAFE Community Based Providers and the two first mentioned are included in this Project.

Community Providers and Commonwealth Education Policy

The Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (CTEC) Draft Report on Adult and Continuing Education* endorses the value to society of adult and continuing education, pointing out that it is in accord with the educational and other policies of the Commonwealth Government and that the National Economy is benefitted.

"The activities of adult and continuing education accord with the educational and other policies of the Commonwealth Government. They contribute to the improvement of the professional and vocational skills of the workforce and therefore to the national economic development. They offer large numbers of people the opportunity to participate in some form of education and, in particular, through non-award education to rejoin the formal education system leading to awards and qualifications. By extending access to the educational resources of the nation they contribute to equity in the use of those resources and to unmeasurable personal growth in a great many individuals. They increase in the students an awareness of social issues, the quality of social debate, the understanding of political and economic and educational questions, and thus contribute to the health and welfare of the total society. They contribute as no other agency does to some disadvantaged groups through programs in Adult Literacy, through education for the aged, and through outreach programs. They are the sectors of education most used^e by women and their special relevance to women is stressed in this report."

(JOHNSON and HINTON 1986)

* The subsequent report to CTEC It's Human Nature was issued shortly before this document went to press. New emphases and inclusions of information could not be taken into account by this Report but quotations from the Draft Report have been updated.

Aims of the CTEC Report

The CTEC Report, describes itself at setting out to record Australia's achievements in the field of adult education. Of the five aims included in its Terms of Reference, two are of special relevance to this Project:

"To assess the contribution of adult and continuing education to the renovation of skills and qualifications; to vocational re-training; to personal development of individuals; to facilitating access to formal tertiary study especially for people in various situations of disadvantage.

To assess the relationship of adult and continuing education to formal education leading to awards in in the various sectors."

(JOHNSON and HINTON 1986)

The Report suggests that much of the first aim stated here will require further and more detailed investigation than was possible at this stage.

Research is Needed

"Probably the biggest area where investigation is needed in adult education is this area concerning the student body. It would need to be carried out by professional sociological investigators using the surveys and other tools of their profession and therefore it would require the level of funding which such surveys demand. Only in this way can we know reliably who takes part in adult and continuing education and, equally importantly, who does not; the reasons for these decisions; the processes and curricula which they experience, which may not always be those which the teachers think they are providing; and the outcomes in personal and vocational and economic and social terms." (my emphases)

(JOHNSON and HINTON 1986)

The CTEC Report offers some information about who participates in adult education but suggests that this is impressionistic rather than hard data. It confirms that women predominate in adult education, and that most are probably middle class. It suggests that the adult education clientele has, on the whole, a small amount of personally disposable income and that:

"although adult and continuing education is provided mostly to people already reasonably well educated and of middle class, its impact on the disadvantaged, especially the educationally disadvantaged is extensive and significant. There are the outreach programs and literacy programs which identify specific disadvantaged groups and seek them out and try to recruit them. However, the most common phenomenon is the student, often male but more often female, who after years away from schooling and away from any society wider than family and immediate friends, will enrol in some non-award general interest course as a first venture into a strange environment and a learning situation; courses in cookery, health and fitness, human development are especially popular, it appears, but obviously any course which interests the student will serve the purpose. Having gained confidence in a such a situation the student goes on often to formal study and qualifications. Such students do not want to be branded 'disadvantaged', they want to take part in mainstream adult education."

(JOHNSON and HINTON 1986)

The Question of Outcomes

It calls for an investigation of outcomes.

"What then are the outcomes for people who take part in adult and continuing education courses? For those who take part in professional courses related to their occupation the outcome seems obvious: enhanced professional competence and possibly increased earning capacity. This should be surveyed and measured. For those involved in general adult education the outcomes can be clearly identified but again not quantified. A better understanding of social and political and economic issues leads to a more aware electorate and society generally, and one would hope, to greater social cohesion. In some instances, particularly for people who are severely deprived either socio-economically

or by reason of physical isolation,
the interests and enrichment of
their lives provided by adult
education programs contribute to
their sense of satisfaction and
mental balance."

(JOHNSON and HINTON 1986)

There is no doubt that the demand is high among the community
for the sorts of programs offered by Community Providers.
Enrichment programs, including many different life skills
courses, are highly valued as Virginia Simmons's TAFE Report
Focus '92 so clearly shows.

(SIMMONS 1983)

What the outcomes of these programs are, in particular the
outcomes in personal, vocational, educational, and social
terms, will be addressed by this research project.

Vocational Education and Training - A Question of Definition of Terms

An examination of TAFE documents pertaining to vocational education and training reveals some inconsistency in the use of the word vocational.

In its Vocational Streams Statement, Stream 4 - Basic Vocational Training (Non-Apprentice) is described as:

"In addition to the proclaimed apprenticeship trades, there is a wide range of other skilled occupations for which TAFE Colleges provide skills training. These courses are classified as Stream 4. The courses are designed around specific jobs, to provide specialised vocational skills. Examples of courses include shorthand, farm welding, concrete technology, boiler attendant, vine production, tailors' cutting, and commercial horticulture"

(TAFE BOARD Program Development Plan May 1985)

Such job specific training is characteristic of much of the offering that TAFE calls vocational. However, in the Aims and Objectives Statement it is acknowledged that:

"The role of TAFE in vocational education will increasingly need to reflect the provision of programs that acknowledge immediate demands of employment but which also provide for specialist and advanced training and the development of transferrable skills."

(TAFE Aims and Objectives Statement July 1985)

Referring specifically to jobs in the computer field, but generalisable to other fields of occupation it is argued that:

"Skills requirements are beginning to look more generic across a wide range of industries, and avenues of career mobility are changing. Basic academic skills, occupational knowledge, problem-solving and interpersonal skills will be the most important ingredients for success in the workplace. Computers will house the basic information, but to utilise the technology to its fullest potential, workers will need a higher level of skills -

including thinking, problem-solving and diagnostic skills."

(TAFE Program Development Plan:
Social and Community Services Field Plan,
March, 1986)

These sorts of statements lead to confusion about whether the concept and practice of vocational education and training should be understood to mean the acquisition of job specific skills or education which also encompasses the broad range of skills relevant to all workers in all occupations.

In the paper 'Influences and Issues in Managing the Changing Profile of TAFE 1986-1990', it is further argued that:

"Education is likely to become increasingly important for success in the workplace. Functionally illiterate adults, those workers who cannot afford and do not have access to privately financed education and training, and workers with fewer years of schooling, including older workers who lose their jobs and young people who drop out of school, are likely to have the most difficulty in the labour market. The quality of education and training is an overriding concern. In addition, changing patterns of worker mobility may diminish the role firms play as trainer and provider of long-term employment; requiring educational institutions and training programs to take on some new roles and responsibilities." (my emphases)

(TAFE February 1986)

In terms of the narrower definition, provision of programs for vocational development tends to be equated with training rather than with education. As D. THORNTON states in 'A Future for TAFE':

"TAFE will be involved still in educating and training the workforce. I deliberately included the term 'educating' because too often the 'educating' aspect is neglected. Erroneously, the term 'training' is, for many, synonymous with 'education' - it really is however, relevant to the acquisition of specific skills, whereas:

'education in its broadest sense is directed towards the development in the individual of the capacity to communicate, to make critical judgements, and to understand the society and culture in which he or she lives.' (Karmel 1984)
To 'train' without 'educating' neglects a fundamental principle of the rights of individuals and raises the spectre of a new manipulated class - akin to the 'factory fodder' of yore."

(THORNTON 1985)

A broader definition of 'vocational' is consistent with the change in emphasis accorded to vocational education by ILO and UNESCO "from primarily seeking to meet industries' needs for manpower, to primarily meeting the needs of the individual person who wishes, within the limits of his capacity, to develop his (sic) abilities to the best advantage."

(TAFE Social and Community Services Field Plan, March 1986)

Different understandings of what is meant by 'vocational' are closely linked with current debate on a number of important education issues.

1. Human capital v labour planning
2. Generic v functional curricula
3. Vocationalism v occupationalism
4. Lifelong and recurrent education v retraining in current technology
5. Education for a post-industrial v education for a super industrial society.

Each of the five first mentioned terms retains "an insistence on the notion of developing 'life skills' such as adaptability, decision making and responsibility, skills which exceed the simply vocational."

(WILLIAMS 1985)

The second mentioned terms have a narrow, specific focus which concentrate on rigid compartmentalisation. They are concerned with "narrow preparation for specific occupations, with the production of non-competing groups of workers with specialised qualifications."

(WILLIAMS 1985)

David Beswick, Professor of Education at University of Melbourne (BESWICK 1985) argues that acceptance of the second group of terms is likely to lead to a super industrial society which is characterised as "authoritarian highly organised and disciplined, competitive education worshipping consumerism in a high energy, low labour usage world. A post industrial society which would call for self-reliant, co-operative, student

centred activities, not inculcating consumerism and expensively packaged everything, but the use of group initiative and self-help to fit into a low energy, labour intensive, interpersonal society."

(HORE 1978)

Karen Kissane, writing in the Business Section of the National Times quotes the following proposition put by Max Charlesworth, Professor of Philosophy at Deakin University:

"One can train a person to carry out a specific and limited task or to employ a certain skill, but to educate him (sic) we must show how his vocational tasks and skills fit into a larger scheme of things, how they are connected with the human values that transcend the demands of his immediate vocational interests, how he can discern what is essential and what is accidental, what is of real value in a professional tradition (in law or medicine, for example).

Without the habits, dispositions and attitudes that are central to liberal education, people may be efficient technologists, engineers, doctors, lawyers and teachers, but they will not be able to contribute creatively to their professions; and in times of change and challenge they will tend to cling to a fixed and rigid support of the status quo, and so not be able to help their professions to modify themselves and to enlarge their perspectives."

(KISSANE 1986)

She also quotes Professor John Freebairn, Research Director at the Business Council of Victoria who says that employers are beginning to accept just this proposition.

"More companies, he says, are following the same line as the U.S. and Japan, deciding that graduates need a good general education and can learn specific skills on the job (which involves companies in upgrading their staff training). A bright person who has been taught to research, analyse and report is generally marketable; one computer company has hired a philosophy graduate.....I think in the long run having astute people who question what they are doing will lead to a more efficient production systems, as well as happier workers."

(KISSANE 1986)

The Community Providers' perspective on education and vocational education is consistent with the notion referred to above, that is, 'skills which exceed the simply vocational'.

The fact that Community Providers take a holistic approach to education, instead of the more unidimensional approach taken by much of the TAFE system, may account for this difference of emphasis. Community Providers are conscious of basic differences between education and training described previously in this report and, in particular, between vocational education and vocational training.

Community Providers' broader definition of these terms is supported by their ethos, style and educational principles and practices. They are therefore concerned that, if too great an expectation is put on them to focus more exclusively on fostering vocational development in its narrower sense, or even on educational development in the sense only of access to formal post-secondary level courses, they will run the risk of becoming mere training centres under pressure to provide a narrow range of goods.

This runs counter to Community Providers' aims and experience where much emphasis is put upon providing a place and space for people to find direction. Their response is to the belief that:

"those who begin from a position of educational disadvantage cannot immediately enter a formal vocational system."

Rather they:

"use non-formal and flexible adult education as their starting point and way in."

(GRIBBLE et al, 1986)

Emphasis on vocational and educational outcomes and purposes, such that they narrow the scope and content of Community Provider programs, implies that a choice of direction has been made before a course is embarked on. The problems this imposes are exacerbated for many Community Provider participants in the case of formal, accredited courses for there is much pressure for completion. Non-completion becomes equated with failure, with 'dropping out', rather than being accepted as discovery that the direction in which the course is leading, or the course itself, is inappropriate for the participant in the light of knowledge gained both from the course content and from increased knowledge about the self.

Discovery of options, of the 'fit' between person and field of work or knowledge and the finding of direction, are important purposes for Community Provider participants.

Courses are taken for a very wide range of purposes as Benson and Saleeba point out, including the stated purpose of the course. Often achievement of the purpose perceived by the participant is accompanied by achievement of other formerly unperceived, but later recognised, purposes. Almost always, new purposes and goals that arise from these achievements were beyond sight at the beginning.

As the CTEC Draft Report points out:

"the 'purpose' of a course is ultimately the purpose in the student's mind rather than the teacher's. Furthermore, a course undertaken for a recreational purpose, such as a craft course, could well have a vocational outcome."

(JOHNSON and HINTON 1986)

In an age where specialisation increasingly cuts off one body of knowledge from another, specialists are often in danger of mere lens polishing, of producing pointlessly intricate work to which only those few of their own kind have access. This is true for the technologist as for the academic. The increasing fragmentation of knowledge resulting from this trend suggests the desirability of a holistic approach to education and training.

Willard van Orman Quine of Harvard University, one of the fathers of modern philosophy proclaims that "knowledge is a seamless web".

(Quoted in *The Economist*, 1986.)

Community Provider philosophy and practice support this proposition. What is learnt derives its importance, relevance and usefulness only from its context. Its context is other knowledge, the learner, the process of learning, the learning environment both institutional and societal. Community Providers embrace this concept. It is their guide to practice. From it stems their success in the personal, educational and vocational enabling and empowerment of individuals. The outcomes of community based provision result from this understanding.

In the TAFE context, at present, it is the measurable concrete educational and vocational outcomes that are considered to be of greatest importance. In other contexts other outcomes are deemed more important. Community Providers however take a holistic view of vocational education. They certainly do not reject the importance of the acquisition of job specific skills but doubt their effectiveness if attention is not concurrently given to other skills that are also important in the workforce.

Breadth of outcome is an essential feature of community based provision. It is carefully guarded by their 'consistent educational philosophy' considered so important by the researchers into the development of Community Colleges in Victoria.

(BESWICK, et al, 1983)

Community Provider philosophy shuns the hierarchical curriculum structures described in the Beswick Report, believing instead in a multi-purpose curriculum which, the Report suggests, poses great difficulty in the thinking of many educationists. Community Providers commitment to this view renders them potentially liable as, it is suggested, Community Colleges may prove to be, to being regarded as occupying the 'lower rung' position in the educational hierarchy. But change that philosophy and they are in danger of the sort of 'academic drift' which, by degrees, may render them inaccessible to the very people by whom and for whom they exist to serve.

Community Providers should not be pressured to concentrate on the sort of educational and vocational outcomes at present most highly valued by the TAFE system. Serious attempts must be made to resolve the present confusion about TAFE's definition of 'vocational' which inhibits the development of trust and affirmation between TAFE and Community Providers. If TAFE clearly indicates its preference for the narrower definition, which many of its priorities and actions suggest that it does, then a dichotomy exists between much of the TAFE system and the Community Providers. If, on the other hand, it confirms the broader definition espoused in so many of its official documents, then its actions should confirm this.

For Community Providers to continue successfully, their activities should not be circumscribed. Nor should TAFE impose objectives which are inconsistent with the Community Provider philosophy and style of education. In short, there should be no pressure to focus on any range of outcomes that is less broad than presently exists.

Education and Vocation - Community Providers' Definition of Terms

At three discussion groups attended by Community Provider representatives and held as part of the consultation process for this Project, agreement on the definition of the key terms of this research was unanimous.

Education

According to Community Providers, learning is an essential and inexorable part of the growth of human beings. It includes:

- building knowledge about things
- building self-knowledge
- discovering the extent of one's own knowledge
- discovery of new knowledge
- self-discovery
- discovery of others
- widening horizons
- becoming aware of the process of learning.

All learning is of potential value to the learner.

Community Providers understand education as the recognition, valuing and promotion of learning. They seek to develop the individual's consciousness of learning so that the learner is proactive (the agent) rather than reactive (the recipient). In Freire's terms education assists the learner's movement from an intransitive to a transitive state. (Freire, 1972)

To become transitive is to develop consciousness of learning which includes developing a consciousness of the learning process. It also includes the development of an understanding of what is learnt in the context of living in society. Consciousness of what one knows (has learnt, is learning), of process and of social context enables one to direct one's learning towards desired ends.

Thus education is about discovering the means by which learning may be directed. It is not only learning how to learn but discovering what uses may be made of one's learning.

Education is about:

- broadening of outlook and 'moving out of boredom'
- developing self-esteem
- participation which also involves companionship and sharing
- learning something new

Education should always involve sharing which is reciprocal. It is concerned with the development of verbal skills, of naming things. Finding the right word means taking control of one's own life. Without the right word one is fearful. Education is about combatting ignorance. Fear of change looms large but this is fear engendered by ignorance.

The outcomes of education should include:

- increased confidence
- increased skills
- participation
- higher self-esteem
- improvement in physical and mental health
- talking and being listened to
- being able to listen and respond
- being able to organise and all that this involves
- becoming more integrated as a person
- greater job prospects
- willingness to try to tackle things not previously attempted
- the ability to meet challenges
- problem solving skills

Interestingly, the diverse range of theories of learning and education do not clearly encompass the Community Providers' understanding of these concepts. Community Providers' views are best explained in Freirian terms. His education for liberation is not unlike Community Providers' education for social justice. More work needs to be done in developing a language and theory of education that accurately describes the Community Provider model. However, it is an area that needs to be addressed by another project.

Vocation

Consistent with their generic view of education, Community Providers subscribe to a holistic view of vocation, preferring to avoid a definition confined to occupation. Community Providers link vocational preparation with education rather than with the convergent notion of training.

Thus vocational education is a subset of education as a whole. One's vocation is the direction one takes or aspires to in order to be productive. Such production is work whether paid or unpaid. Essentially, vocational and educational development cannot be separated.

There is an important distinction between the traditional and non-traditional meanings of vocational.

Traditional Meaning

Paid work - usually for someone else

Qualifications - pieces of paper

Career - long term predetermined plan

Predetermined programs of study and work

Updating of qualifications

Contract education for professional advancement.

Non-Traditional Meaning

Vocational has to do with the growth process, with personal aspirations, with discovery, with 'fit' between persons and what they do.

Goals are discovered:

- in an appropriate environment
- in a non-threatening atmosphere
- through a communicative process
- in a support system
- in the context of a feeling of worth and confidence.

Vocation is not necessarily to do with money, i.e. money is not the most important factor. The intrinsic value of one's work is at least of equal importance.

Community Provider Involvement in Vocational Training

In a non-traditional sense, the Community Providers are very involved in vocational training. The differences are, that in providing opportunities for vocational change or development, they:

- provide time and space for individuals to reassess their life and directions
- offer support for making changes and taking risks e.g. the personal risk involved in moving from being an employee to being self-employed, from being a home-maker to taking outside employment responsibilities whether the work involved is paid or unpaid.
- provide space for choice of direction to evolve:
 - through courses
 - through volunteer involvement
 - through paid involvement

Consequently, Community Provider participants can take a flexible approach to learning. They:

- can see their choice as a trial run
- suffer no loss of face or self-esteem if the individual pauses or stops.
- can change easily from one program to another to discover 'best' area/goals
- can move in and out of learning experiences
- can play different roles, - give and take, - learn and teach
- can match their learning with changing life styles and stages of their lives
- can take control of their own learning
- can experiment with what may turn out to be pre-vocational education but are not under pressure as to direction or continuation. Community Providers are used by participants as launching pads into new or different opportunities.

Community Providers also promote the traditional vocational outcomes. However, while successful outcomes are traditionally measured in economic terms, Community Providers also measure vocational success as development of confidence, growth, fulfilment and increased contribution to society in a much wider range of ways.

(See Appendix L for detailed notes of discussion)

M E T H O D O L O G Y

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Attendance

Three modes of attendance at a Community Provider are included in the survey.

1. Enrolment in a course/program

In 1983, a range of programs was offered by Community Providers including courses consistent with three TAFE Streams:

a) Vocational - Stream 4

e.g. Return to Work, Typing, Bookkeeping - programs designed to develop job-related skills for those wishing to re-enter the workforce.

b) Preparatory - Stream 5

Access Courses for those who hope to proceed to further education. e.g. HSC, TOP, Basic Literacy and Numeracy, Community Languages, pre HSC and TOP courses in such areas as English, Politics, Maths.

c) Enrichment - Stream 6

Courses offered to assist in personal growth, interpersonal relations and the development of leisure skills, e.g. Yoga, Assertiveness Training, Handicrafts, Parenting Programs, Cookery, and Health and Fitness.

2. Paid worker, e.g. co-ordinator, teacher.

3. Unpaid worker, e.g. member of committee, clerical assistant, teacher.

Vocational Outcome

For the purposes of the Project this term is defined in three different ways as appropriate to its context.

1. In reference to joining the paid workforce as a quantifiable outcome of Community Provider attendance, vocational assumes the narrow definition discussed previously. That is, vocational is synonymous with occupational.
2. In reference to skills learnt or developed which may serve a vocational purpose, 'vocational' assumes a broader definition. Such vocational skills are useful both generally and in the workforce. These skills are transferable and should be categorised according to the purpose for which they are learnt or used. For example, life skills are both personally and individually useful and are also useful in the workplace, pottery can be either a leisure activity or an occupational, income-producing skill.
3. In reference to respondents' perceptions of their own vocational development as an outcome of attendance at a Community Provider, 'vocational' skills are both job specific and transferrable.

Educational Outcome

Here too, three definitions are relevant to this research.

1. An 'educational outcome' may be defined as the gaining of such credentials as are required for enrolment in further or higher education, or as enrolment in such a course.
2. The acquisition or development of skills or knowledge is an 'educational outcome.'
3. An 'educational outcome' may also be synonymous with a participant's perceptions. If the participant claims that they have developed educationally then that constitutes an educational outcome.

In general, educational and vocational outcomes are defined as identifiable changes taking place in people's lives subsequent to or during their attendance at a Community Provider and pertaining to the notions of education and vocation as previously defined.

Community Provider

Community Providers comprise Community Houses, Learning Centres, Neighbourhood Centres and Adult Literacy Groups and Programs.

The focus of operations of the first three types of Community providers include community development, 'well-fare' and education. For these groups the offering of TAFE programs constitutes one facet of their operation.

Adult Literacy Groups and Programs are traditionally single purpose groups offering TAFE programs in basic education.

All Community Providers participating in this research presently hold either interim or full registration with the Eastern Metropolitan Regional TAFE Board for provision of TAFE programs.

RESEARCH STAGES

The research was carried out in four main stages.

1. Survey of Community Providers

Survey by questionnaire of 57 Community Providers in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of TAFE to establish their interest in being involved in the Project. This questionnaire also sought information from these Community Providers in respect of meeting the following criteria for involvement.

a) Size of Community Provider

Community Providers in the Region vary considerably in size which is calculated from annual numbers of enrollees in courses/programs. It was considered necessary to include both large and small providers in order to obtain a representative unit. Large providers were deemed to be those with annual enrolments of more than 400 participants and small providers those with enrolments of fewer than 400 participants. Numbers of enrollees were established from TAFE annual statistical returns.

b) TAFE Category

In 1983 TAFE had not yet established categories for inclusion of Community Providers. The Project required inclusion of Category C and Category E Providers together with Local Advisory Committees now defined as Category A3. For the purposes of the Project, Community Providers were assumed to hold the interim registration awarded by the Eastern Regional TAFE Board in 1985. (See Appendix B).

c) Focus of Activities

The Project required inclusion of Community Providers whose primary focus was Enrichment programs together with those Providers who also offered Vocational and Preparatory programs. This information was drawn from TAFE annual statistical returns.

d) Date of Inception

For inclusion in the Project survey, Community Providers needed to have begun operations no later than the beginning of 1983.

e) Existence of 1983 Mailing List

Because the survey was to be carried out by mailed questionnaire, inclusion in the survey was limited to those Community Providers who could provide a 1983 mailing list of participants.

f) Geographic Location

Community providers to be included in the survey should be broadly spread across the Region.

Response to the Initial Survey

Responses were received from 32 Community Providers.

Of these, 31 Community Providers expressed interest in being involved in the Project.

20 of these Community Providers also possessed mailing lists of 1983 participants.

Subsequently, 5 Community Providers in this latter group withdrew* from direct involvement in the Project, leaving 15 Community Providers who were both eligible and had 1983 mailing lists.

1. ARRABRI COMMUNITY HOUSE
2. AUGUSTINE CENTRE
3. BLACKBURN LITERACY PROGRAM
4. DONVALE LIVING AND LEARNING CENTRE
5. ELEY PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE
6. HEALESVILLE LIVING AND LEARNING CENTRE
7. KOONUNG COTTAGE
8. MOUNTAIN DISTRICT WOMEN'S CO-OPERATIVE LTD.
9. NORTH RINGWOOD COMMUNITY HOUSE
10. NUNAWADING NORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE
11. POLTA/PARK ORCHARDS COMMUNITY HOUSE
12. THE AVENUE NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE
13. UPPER YARRA COMMUNITY HOUSE
14. WAVERLEY ADULT LITERACY PROGRAM
15. WAVERLEY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRE

These 15 Community Providers presented a suitable selection in terms of size, TAFE category, geographic spread and course type. (See Appendices B and C).

- * - Camberwell Community Centre and Canterbury Neighbourhood Centre each felt that TAFE research was not relevant to them.
- Hawthorn Community Education Project considered that their clientele (the aged) were not relevant to the Project.
- Vermont South Community House discontinued its interest.
- Outer Eastern Literacy Program was concerned about the confidentiality in relation to its clients.

2. Consultation with Community Providers

Extensive consultation with Community Providers in the Eastern Region was undertaken. The consultation had two main aims:

- a) To ensure that the research was relevant to and consistent with the philosophy and operation of Community Providers.
- b) To maintain continued commitment of Community Providers to the Project.

Consultation took three forms:

- a) Representation of Community Providers on the Project Advisory Committee.
- b) Informal discussions with Community Provider representatives and participants throughout the Project.
- c) Scheduled group meetings of Community Provider representatives to discuss specific research issues.
 - (i) Three groups met with the Project Officer in December 1985 to clarify the terms of reference and the aims of the Project and to define the key terms of the research. (See Appendix L).
 - (ii) Three groups met with the Project Officer in March 1986 to pilot the questionnaire and to advise on its construction and potential effectiveness.

3. Survey of 1983 Participants by Mailed Questionnaire

Drawing on the Literature Review, on the Project Brief and on Community Provider advice, a questionnaire was constructed for mailing to selected participants. The questionnaire was accompanied by a covering letter from the Community Provider attended by the participant in 1983. (See Appendices D and E).

4. Case Studies of Community Provider Participants

18 Community Providers agreed to provide case studies of 4 to 8 past participants, one or two in each of the following categories.

- Category 1. Participants whose attendance at a Community provider led them to enter or re-enter the paid workforce.
- Category 2. Participants whose attendance at a Community Provider led them to begin formal study, e.g. at University, College of Advanced Education, TAFE College, etc.
- Category 3. Participants whose attendance at a Community Provider led them to become actively involved in the community, e.g. Local Government, management committee, social welfare, etc.
- Category 4. Participants whose attendance at a Community Provider was instrumental in their personal development, e.g. self-confidence, self-respect, mental health, etc.

Participants were asked to write a brief profile of themselves which included the following information:

- why they came to the Community Provider
- what they did there
- how the Centre helped them
- what they are doing now as a result

SELECTION OF THE SAMPLE

On the basis of 1983 and 1984 TAFE statistics it was estimated that in 1983 approximately 15,000 people participated in Community Providers in the Eastern Metropolitan Region. It was decided that a sample of 10% would be appropriate, that is, a sample of approximately 1500.

The following sampling methods were used:

1. Mailing lists requested from the 15 Community Providers selected.

2. Strata Sampling

Stratification of the sample according to the mode of attendance at a Community Provider. This resulted in a four tier strata.

- a) Attendance in a Stream 4/5 course
- b) Attendance in a Stream 6 course
- c) Attendance as a paid worker
e.g. Co-ordinator, teacher, child care worker
- d) Attendance as an unpaid worker
e.g. Committee member, teacher, clerical assistance, child care worker.

Actual numbers of persons participating in selected Community Providers in 1983.

	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>
a) Stream 4/5 and Literacy Nos.	641	11.08
b) Stream 6	4,628	80.03
c) Paid worker	317	5.48
d) Unpaid worker	<u>197</u>	<u>3.41</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>5,783</u>	<u>100.00%</u>

3. Systematic Sampling

The accepted mode of selecting a sample from a strata sample is to use systematic sampling procedure.

In order to achieve a sample of approximately 1500, 25% of participants in each of the four tiers of the strata were selected.

This resulted in selection of the following sample.

TABLE 3 - SAMPLE

<u>Stream 4/5</u>	<u>Stream 6</u>	<u>Paid Workers</u>	<u>Unpaid Workers</u>	<u>Total</u>
159	1155	80	48	1442
11.03%	80.09%	5.55%	3.33%	100%

(Appendix F details the selection of the sample).

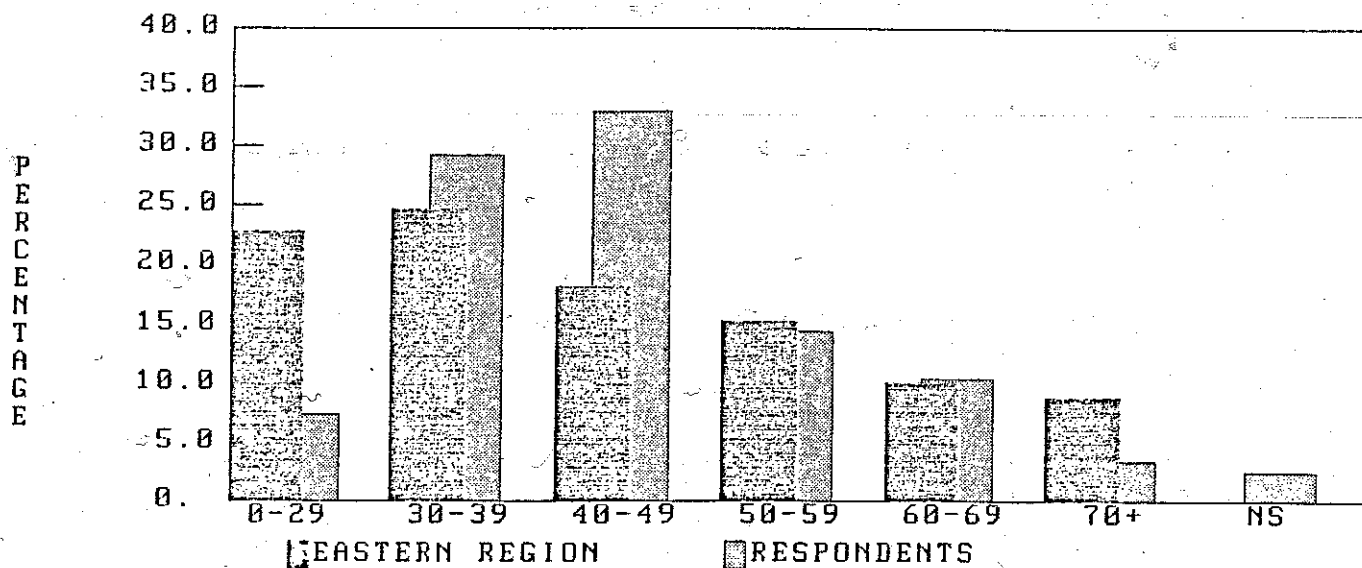
Questionnaires were mailed to 1442 1983 Community provider participants.

The results were analysed using SPSSX package (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) on a VAX Computer.

FINDINGS of the RESEARCH

2. SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC DATA

GRAPH 1: AGE OF RESPONDENTS



RESPONDENTS COMPARED WITH E. REGION

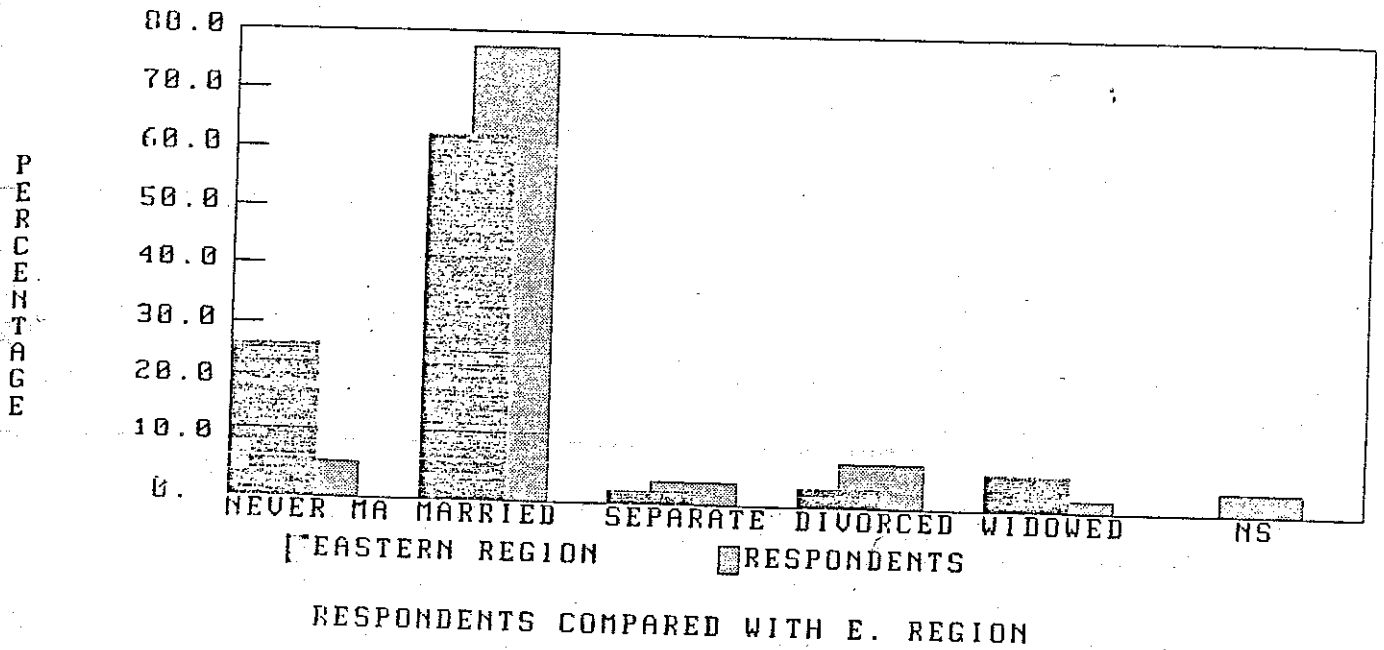
The majority of respondents to the questionnaire (62.03%) were aged between 30 and 49 years.

Sex of Respondents

	<u>Total Attendance</u>	<u>Enrolled in course/program</u>
Female	85%	88%
Male	15%	12%

Participants at a Community Provider in 1983 were predominantly female. This accords with the findings of the report TAFE in the Eastern Region: An Overview which showed that, for women enrolled in TAFE courses in 1984, 44% were enrolled in a Community Provider compared with 8.02% of men.

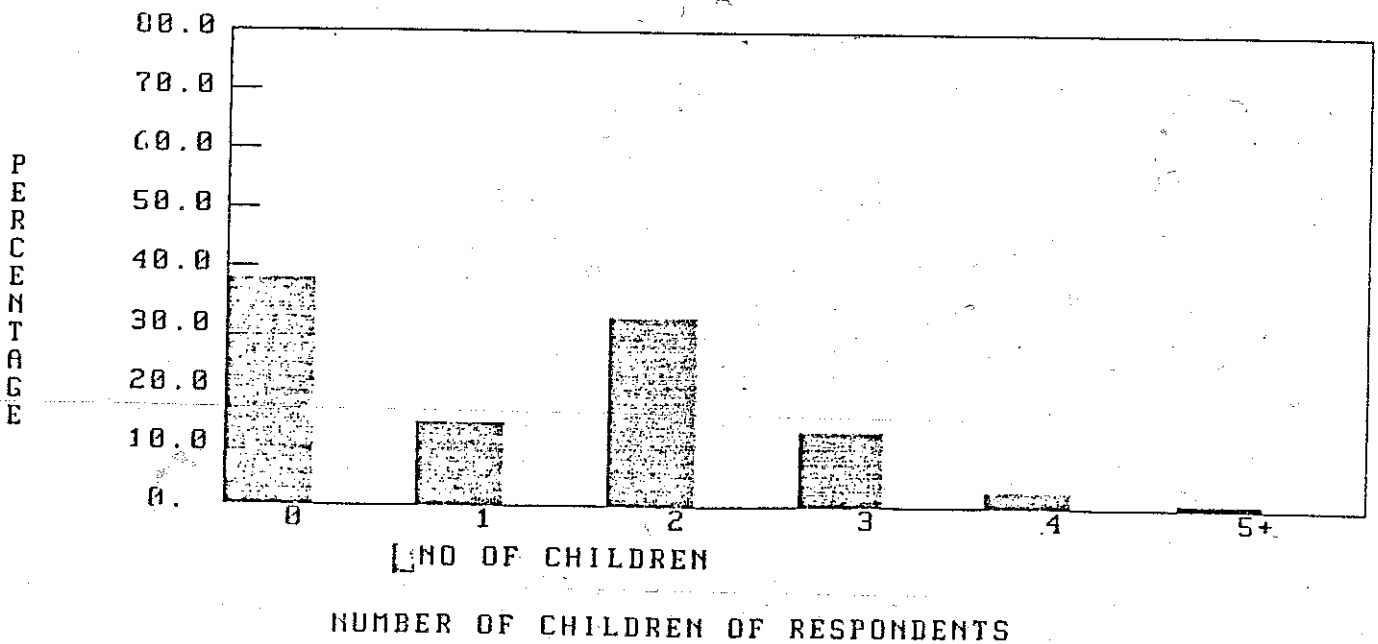
GRAPH 2: MARITAL STATUS



* This option was not offered, nevertheless, a number of respondents chose to indicate that they are widowed.

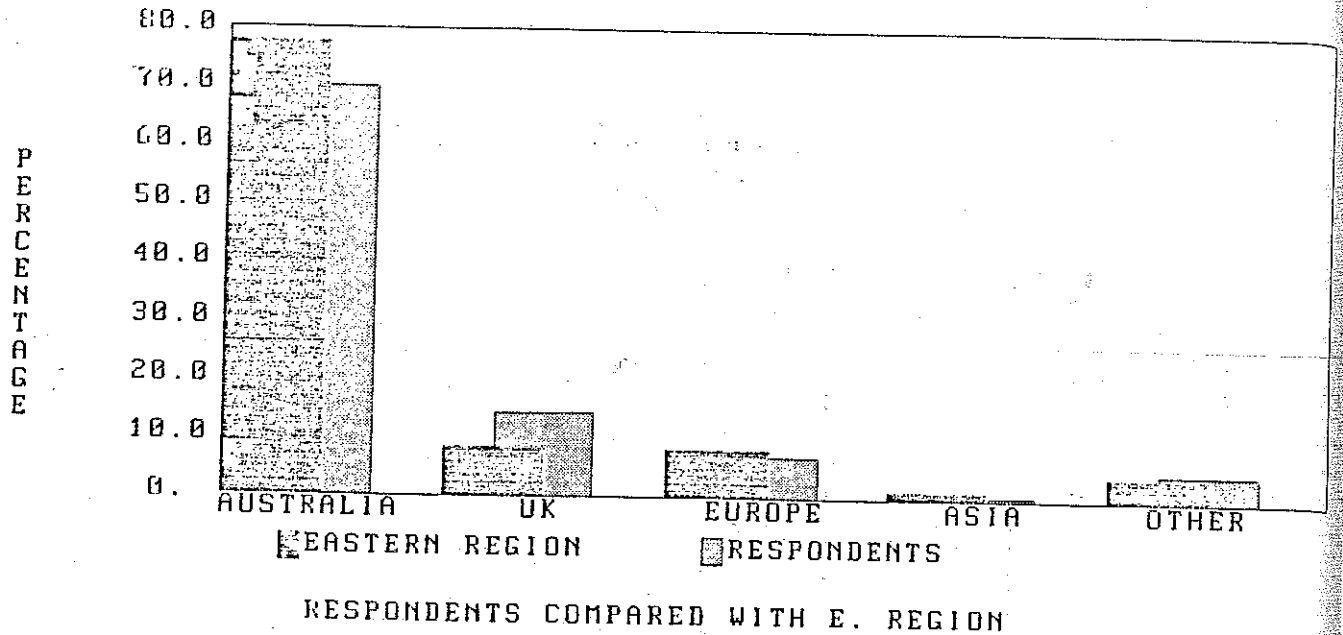
Married, separated and divorced people are more highly represented among respondents to the questionnaire than among the population of the Eastern Region. The proportion of never married people is much lower due to the fact that very few people in the 15-20 age group attend Community Providers.

GRAPH 3: DEPENDANTS



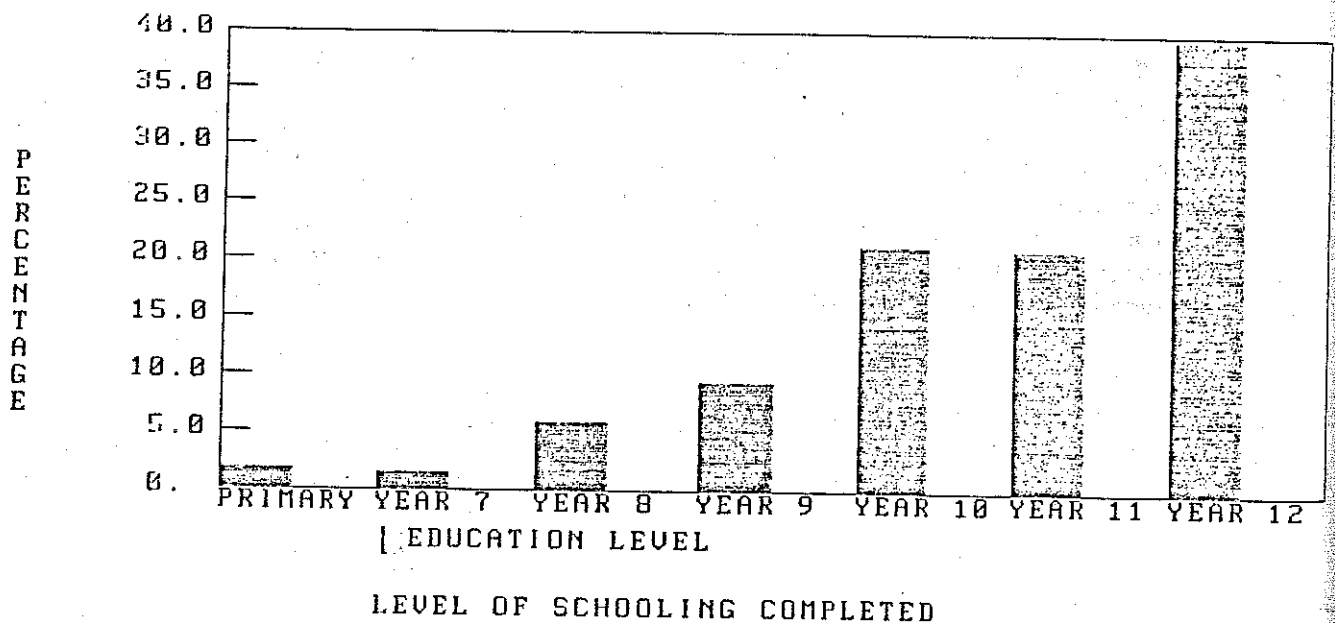
62% of respondents had one or more dependent children. Of these, the largest proportion had two children.

GRAPH 4 : COUNTRY OF BIRTH



Respondents to the questionnaire represented a higher proportion of migrants, especially from the UK, than does the Regional population.

GRAPH 5 : EDUCATION LEVEL



60.05% of respondents to this question had not completed secondary schooling. It appears that the programs offered by one centre attracted a higher proportion of respondents who had completed secondary schooling. At this Centre, 68.05% of the respondents had completed secondary schooling compared with an average of 32.06% at other centres.

A comparable figure for the population as a whole is not available. Australian Bureau of Statistics cites the age at which individuals left school rather than the level of schooling completed. In the Ministerial Review of Post-Compulsory Schooling it is stated that the apparent retention rate to the last year of schooling in Victoria (Year 12) in 1984 was 50.7% including TAFE attendance. The earliest figures available are for 1973 when the apparent school retention rate to Year 12 was 33.7% (McGraw and Hannon 1985). This, however, is a deflated figure since it does not include participation in TAFE equivalents.

3. ATTENDANCE PATTERNS

The survey revealed the following information regarding modes of attendance at Community Providers.

TYPE OF PARTICIPATION

	<u>No. of Respondents</u>	<u>Percentage of Respondents</u>
Enrolled in a program	232	77.03%
Fundraiser	3	1.00
Co-ordinator	5	1.07
Committee member	26	8.07
Discussion group member	13	4.03
Teacher/tutor	33	11.00
Group leader	6	2.00
Other	7	2.30

Some respondents indicated more than one mode of participation.

ENROLMENT IN PROGRAMS

Of the 300 respondents to the questionnaire, 232 were enrolled in a program at a Community provider in 1983.

These enrollees accounted for 476 program enrolments.

Programs were classified as follows:

a) Transferrable Skills

Such skills are concerned with personal and interpersonal skills development. They address both personal and vocational objectives. Programs which address such objectives include Group Facilitation, Communication Skills, Stress Management and Personal Assertiveness.

b) General Education

The content of these programs contributes to both vocational development and the development of satisfying leisure activities. Such programs range from Walking with a Naturalist to Advanced Pottery, from Soap Making to Art Appreciation.

c) Job Specific Training Programs

These programs are concerned with meeting job specific objectives. They include Keyboard Skills, Bookkeeping and Accounting, and Returning to Work.

d) Basic Education

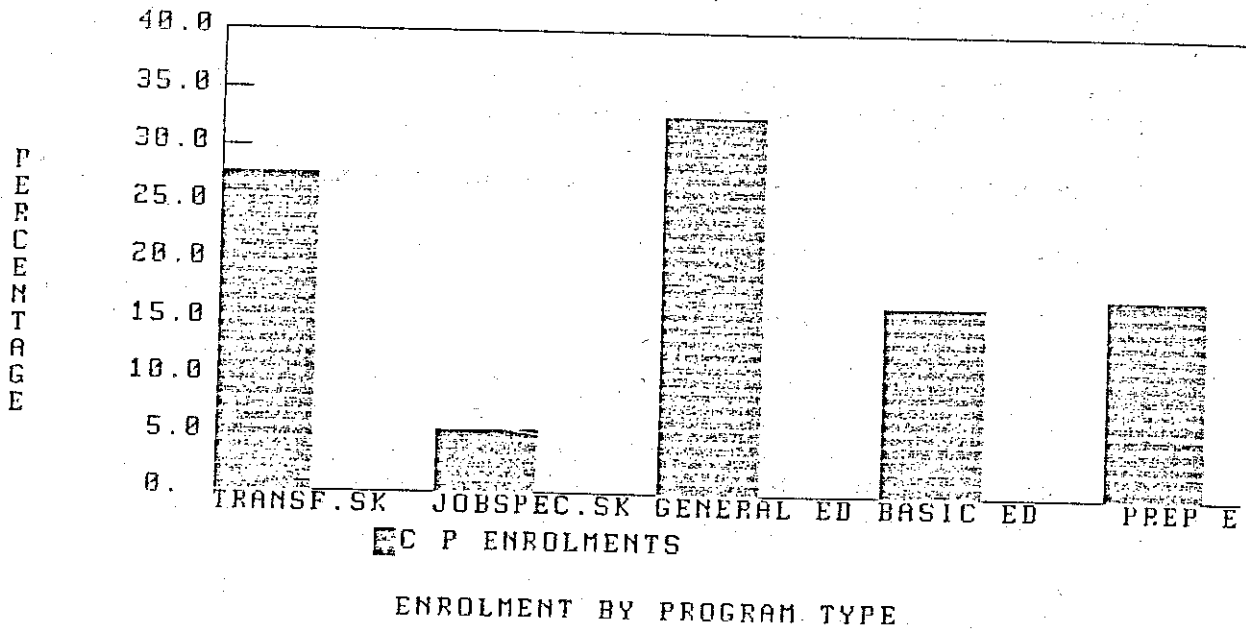
The objectives of these programs are the acquisition of both practical and cognitive skills. Included are Basic Cookery and Nutrition, Home Maintenance, and Basic Literacy and Numeracy Skills.

e) Preparatory Programs

The aims of these programs is to prepare for further and higher education. They include HSC/TOP programs, Study Skills and Community Languages.

Respondents to the questionnaire were enrolled in programs as follows:

GRAPH 6 : ENROLMENTS IN C.P. PROGRAMS



Reasons for Choice of Centre

	<u>Percentage of Total Respondents</u>	<u>Percentage of Enrollees</u>
Low fees	28.7%	32.3%
Child care available	14.3	15.9
A particular course available	64.3	69.8
Close to home	43.7	47.8
Accessible to public transport	2.6	3.0
Friendly, relaxed atmosphere	46.3	46.9
Friend's recommendation	10.0	9.9
Small classes	9.0	8.6
Feeling of equality	6.0	5.2
Feeling you could offer assistance	8.7	3.8
Being offered a job there	3.0	.4
Saw an advertisement	10.0	11.6
Reputation of Centre/House/Group	9.6	9.0
Reputation of teacher/tutor	8.3	9.0
Other	2.0	1.7

This table represents the frequency count of these options.
Note that respondents were able to select more than one option.

As may be observed, the most frequently cited reason for choice of a particular Centre is the offering of a particular course. Also very important are the learning environment and its geographic location.

Contribution of Respondents to Program Maintenance

	<u>Percentage of Respondents</u>
Childcare	8.7%
Cleaning	7.7
Clerical work	11.0
Supervising	4.0
Contacting others	10.0
Planning	8.3
Organising activities	7.7
Co-ordinating activities	5.0
Decision making	8.0
Caring for participants	4.7
Other	2.7

This demonstrates that participants at a Community Provider are also involved in the administration, decision-making and operation of their Centres. The level of contribution to activities other than enrolment in courses is evidence of the community contribution to the maintenance of programs.

SUMMARY

Community Providers offer a wide range of programs. Present TAFE classification of programs (Vocational, Preparatory, Enrichment) does not allow for the identification of the variety of programs offered. It has been necessary to develop other relevant descriptions in order to classify these types of programs.

Respondents chose to attend a Community Provider for a wide variety of reasons, the most important of which was the opportunity for the development of specific skills and interests.

Respondents' participation in a Community Provider is not confined to enrolment in programs. Program users are also involved in supporting the delivery of programs and in the management of Centres.

4. OUTCOMES OF ATTENDANCE

Respondents' Perception of their Development

Respondents to the questionnaire were asked to indicate the relative importance they attributed to the contribution of Community Provider programs to their individual development in respect of the following:

1. Educational development
2. Vocational development
3. Development of satisfying leisure activities
4. Personal development

Respondents were first asked to explain or define these terms which resulted in the following response.

Educational Development

The explanations/definitions were that educational development means:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| a) all kinds of learning | 38.6% |
| b) the acquisition of knowledge | 42.9% |
| c) the development of skills | 19.0% |

Only 7.1% of respondents to the question equated educational development with academic work and 9.5% with the acquisition of formal qualifications.

Vocational Development

Explanations/definitions offered were that vocational development is mainly concerned with:

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a) the acquisition of job specific skills | 78.0% |
| b) the acquisition of transferrable work skills | 40.0% |

It should be noted that a number of respondents offered both explanations.

Development of Satisfying Leisure Activities

The two explanations/definitions of this term most frequently offered were that such development constituted:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a) the acquisition of skills to be used in
leisure time | 50.0% |
| b) the enhancement of the quality of
leisure time | 41.7% |

Personal Growth/Development

Most respondents to the question offered the view that personal growth/development is concerned with:

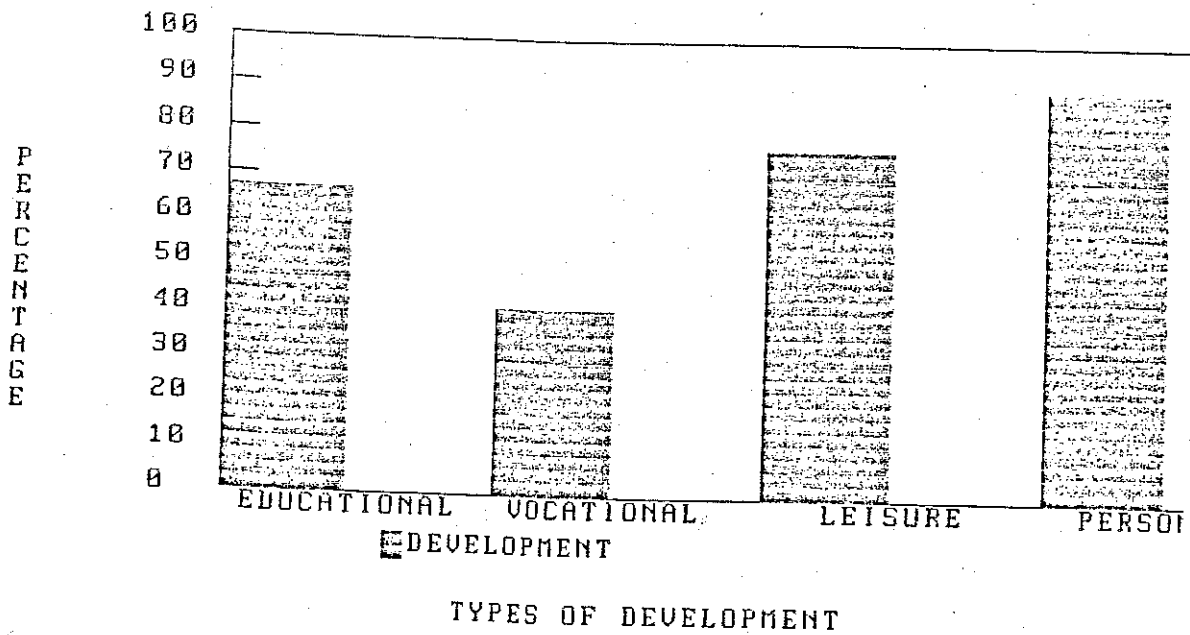
- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| a) interpersonal skills | 34.6% |
| b) the building of confidence | 28.8% |
| c) self-understanding | 26.4% |
| d) self-esteem | 25.5% |

Some respondents offered a two-part definition.

Having defined the terms above, respondents were asked to rate the relative importance they attributed to the contribution of Community Provider programs to their individual development. Rating was on a five point scale (See Appendix D).

This resulted in the following data:

GRAPH 7 : IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPMENT



SUMMARY

Most respondents to these questions equated their individual development with the learning of skills relevant to improving their quality of life. Knowledge and skills were, on the whole, more highly regarded for their intrinsic value than for the material rewards that they might bring.

Respondents overwhelmingly acknowledged the contribution that their attendance at a Community Provider had made to their individual development.

Acquisition of Skills

Respondents were asked to record what they saw as their achievements as an outcome of their attendance at a Community Provider. Such achievements were explained in the questionnaire as:

- i. achievements important to the individual
- ii. acquisition of skills helpful in the home
- iii. acquisition of skills helpful to community participation
- iv. acquisition of skills to produce income

(i) Achievements most often cited as individually important

<u>Achievement</u>	<u>Percentage of Enrolees</u>
Make new friends	64.2%
Learn a new skill	60.2
Find mental stimulation	57.1
Become more confident	57.1
Find a new interest	50.0
Develop an existing skill	40.3
See more clearly what you want from life	34.5
Preserve your sanity	33.9
Become more independent	33.6

While social contact was of obvious importance to 1983 Community Provider participants, almost as important were the learning and development of skills, finding mental stimulation and developing confidence.

(ii) Acquisition of skills helpful in the home

<u>Skill</u>	<u>Percentage of Enrolees</u>
Family relationships	38.6%
Time management	36.6
Home crafts	31.7
Improved health	27.7
Nutrition	20.8
Child care	15.3

Overall, 87% of respondents enrolled at a Community Provider in 1983 indicated that their attendance had contributed to the acquisition of skills helpful in the home.

(iii) Acquisition of skills helpful to community participation

<u>Skill</u>	<u>Percentage of Enrolees</u>
Communication skills	64.9%
Helping skills	48.3
Counselling skills	45.7
Decision-making skills	33.8
Meetings skills	27.2
Administrative skills	19.2
Lobbying skills	14.6

Overall, 65% of respondents enrolled in a Community Provider program in 1983 indicated that their attendance had contributed to the acquisition of skills helpful to community involvement.

(iv) Acquisition of skills to produce income

43.1% of respondents enrolled in a Community Provider program in 1983 indicated that they were using skills learnt through their attendance in order to produce income.

SUMMARY

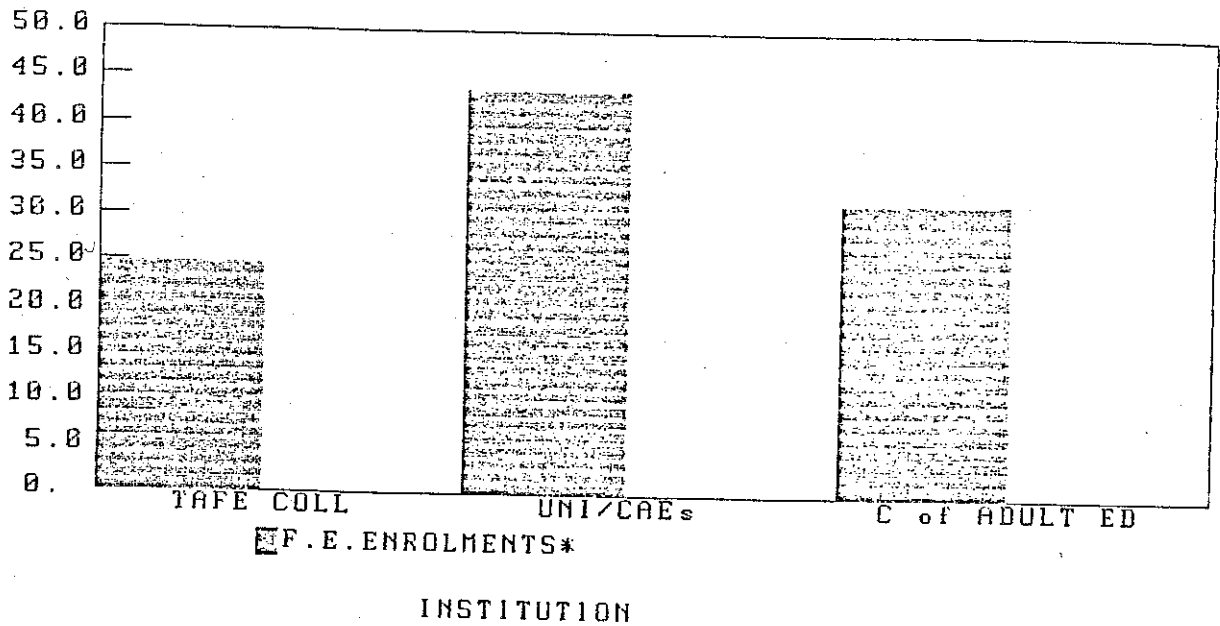
Community Provider participation contributed to the development of a wide range of skills useful both in the home and in the community. Skills learnt at a Community Provider were also frequently used by participants as a means of producing income.

Destinations of Participants

i) Participation in Further Education

Of the 300 respondents to the questionnaire 232 were enrolled in a Community Provider program in 1983. Of these, 88 (38%) shared between them 101 enrolments in a Further Education course between 1984 and 1986.

GRAPH B : F.E. ENROLMENTS 1984-1986



Some enrollees registered for courses at more than one institution.

i) Participation in the Paid Workforce

Employment status - Of the 300 respondents to the questionnaire, 163 (54.5%) were not members of the paid workforce in 1983.

Of these 163 respondents:

- (i) 123 were enrolled in a Community Provider program in 1983 of whom 41 (33.3%) joined the paid workforce subsequent to 1983.
- (ii) 40 participated in the activities of a Community Provider in another mode (e.g. Committee member, volunteer helper) of whom 11 (27.5%) joined the paid workforce subsequent to 1983.

In total, 52 of the 163 respondents who were not employed in 1983 (31.9%) subsequently rejoined the workforce.

Of the 147 respondents who were members of the paid workforce in 1983, 21.2% have improved the status of their job subsequent to their attendance at a Community Provider in 1983.

The indication here is that Community Provider attendance may be seen to have a positive influence on improving employment status.

SUMMARY

Although Community Providers do not include among their stated aims the preparation of participants for higher education or for the labour market, nevertheless, this data constitutes strong evidence that such is a major outcome of Community Provider attendance.

OUTCOMES - PARTICIPANTS' VIEWS OF THEIR LEARNING

The request to the Community Providers in the Region for Case Studies of participants resulted in the receipt of 55 Case Studies from 14 Community Providers.

It was suggested that four categories be considered. Case Studies were sought of participants who attributed a role to Community Providers in terms of:

- Category 1. Helping them to prepare for and get a job.
- Category 2. Helping them to begin further study, e.g. at University, College of Advanced Education, TAFE College, etc.
- Category 3. Helping them to become actively involved in the community.
- Category 4. Helping them in their personal development, e.g. confidence, self respect, etc.

The original intention was to present these Case Studies classified according to these criteria. In the event this proved impossible. Almost all accounts of Community Provider experience fell into more than one category; some of them crossed all four.

The sample of 10 Case Studies presented here was chosen as representing the range of responses received in respect of:

- a) the variety of involvement in Community Provider programs
- b) the types of people who attend Community providers
- c) the effects that Community Provider involvement has had in participants' lives.

Appendix L presents a further 45 Case Studies.

These Case Studies chronicle, in participants' own words, the changes in perceptions and attitudes, the building of confidence and self-esteem and the achievements in educational and vocational terms that they attribute to their involvement in the activities of a Community Provider.

Many respondents refer to the loneliness and isolation experienced in their role of full time mother and housekeeper. For some, this experience had been the result of moving to a new suburb, state or country away from their previous network of family and friends.

Others with a learning or physical disability have been able to develop skills which they had despaired of ever possessing or to find the means of contributing to society in a mutually satisfying way.

Not all participants come to a Community Provider looking for help in solving problems. Retirement and parenthood, in particular, offer the opportunity to become involved in different activities and in a different way of life often unavailable to those in the paid workforce. These people found satisfaction in their learning and in their contribution to the community through Community Provider participation.

And there are those participants who, having come to a Community Provider for companionship and support, discovered new horizons. They found avenues opened to them to learn and to succeed in areas they had never previously contemplated.

Above all, these Case Studies demonstrate the enabling impact of Community Provider participation which has encouraged their authors to contribute more fully to society and take greater responsibility for their own lives.

KATHI

I attended the Mountain District Women's Co-operative in 1978 as a mature-age student and completed English Expression at HSC level. The following year I studied two further units (Human Development and Classical Civilization) which facilitated my entry to Monash University. Now I am in my final year and by November will have completed an Arts degree at honours level. My major is in English Literature and minors are in Classical Literature and History. Next year I will either seek employment or continue studying as a post-graduate.

In 1978 my child was eleven months old, and though I enjoyed caring for her full-time there was a lack of intellectual stimulation in my life. The Co-operative offered child-minding facilities, close proximity, very reasonable charges and other students were similar to myself in age and situation. I had found out about the venue from the local paper and from a booklet in the Monbulk milk bar.

Enrolment was easy and my initial impression of a friendly informal atmosphere was subsequently borne out. Like many other mature-age students I began studying in an experimental way, with the notion that I could leave if things did not work out. However, the various teachers were tremendously approachable and supportive, and astute with regard to the hesitancy and tentativeness of older students. They were careful also to reinforce positive and realistic attitudes within the group. Overt emphasis on achievement as indicated by marks was missing, and a strong feeling of camaraderie flourished in a non-threatening atmosphere where debate and discussion took place.

My perception of my own values and behaviour was clarified by discussions of contemporary issues. This had the effect of increasing my confidence. As a result of my attendance at the Co-operative I formed friendships which have been lasting and valuable since the years 1978-79.

PAT

In March 1977 I emigrated from England to Melbourne, with my husband and sons aged 10 months and 2½ years.

My only friend lived in Ballarat, and I could best be described as shy, lacking in self-esteem and motivation, and uncertain of my future in Australia.

My husband worked most of his waking hours for the first few years, and joining the playgroup at Morrison House was the start of a new life for me. It enabled me to make friends who had children of a similar age, who supported me and accepted me with a warmth I had not previously encountered. Through them I gained knowledge of useful groups such as babysitting clubs, and became involved in the community, as well as making lasting friendships.

From the playgroup a neighbourhood network developed, and from volunteering to take phone enquiries about craft I found myself not only teaching macrame, but also arranging craft demonstration, a large step for me at the time. My involvement led to membership of the management committee, and later co-ordination of the network as a whole for a time. This gave my self-confidence a boost, giving me the courage to join other committees such as the pre-school, whereas before I had been very nervous of speaking in a group.

Other personal development came from meeting and talking to such a wide variety of women, sharing ideas and philosophies, as well as common interests such as reading. This stimulated me to consider my own aims and philosophies, although it often meant the dinner was late! The Community House also offered the opportunity to participate in self development courses, such as self awareness, communication skills and organizational skills.

By 1980 the network had grown to a Community House and two part-time co-ordinators had been employed. When my youngest child started pre-school I found that craft and volunteer work was no longer enough, and I decided to return to study. I chose a Certificate of Business Studies - Accounting, with the view of rejoining the workforce, having previously worked as a bookkeeper. I studied through Box Hill TAFE Off-Campus to fit in with kindergarten and a traveling husband. To earn some extra money I also started direct-selling cosmetics, something which needed a lot of resolution on my part, but which left me with improved confidence, if not much richer!

During this period I had little to do with Morrison House, but after a while studying at home became lonely, and a visit from parents left me depressed and unsettled. Mentioning this to one of the Committee I soon received an offer of the Treasurer's position on the Committee of Management, which I found a good opportunity to try out some of my accounting skills, as well as a welcome return to community involvement. I also had the opportunity of attending my first AACE Conference in Adelaide, a very stimulating trip which fired me with renewed enthusiasm for Community Education.

Two years ago I was offered the paid position of Administrator at Morrison House, sharing the job and working 10 hours a week. This has enabled me to use my accounting skills, but also to develop people skills, and experience in a wide range of activities from submission writing to organising presentations.

A trip back to England last year showed me that Australia is certainly now my home, and the life-styles of my family and friends showed how my attitudes and aims had changed. I saw very clearly how much my community meant to me, and was very glad to return.

I now feel that I have grown as far as I can in my present position, and am once more moving away from the Community House to take up a position as a bookkeeper. I hope to consolidate my skills and knowledge, and to gain experience to further my eventual aim of setting up my own computerized bookkeeping service.

It is difficult to sum up something which has enabled me to take charge of my life, and to develop as a person, but I certainly feel that I owe a great deal to Morrison House.

MICHELLE

I moved to Park Orchards 14 months ago, enrolled my kids in school and was told about the Community House, how you could do classes drop in for coffee or just say hello.

So I gave myself a couple of days to settle in and then I went to the House and that is where everything changed for me.

Everyone was so kind and friendly, Betty the Co-ordinator conned me into doing a course called Communication Skills. Well, that first day I was so worried, because I can't read or write, and I did not know if you had to get up and read out aloud. Everyone was getting up and saying things so I just sat there and did not say a thing, more scared than anything, a week went past and it was the day of the course. I went along to tell them I was not going to come anymore.

We were all sitting in a circle, everyone talking about their problems, I thought to myself I have hidden this for so long, that it was time to get it off my chest, so I told everyone. I don't think they knew what to say. Betty did not believe me at first until I explain to her all my work I have done for the house was all copy.

So what I am trying to say is if I had not done the course and with all the girls behind me I would not be going back to school this term to learn to read and write. And also I am not hiding it anymore. Thank's to the Community House.

The activities I am doing in the house now babysitting, on the committee, I was teaching a course last term. I would not have done any of this if it had not been for the house and the people who also work in it.

DIANE

Perhaps I had best begin by saying that in answering your study with respect to question 2, I might just as well fit into category 4.

Without the development of my self confidence, and self respect, I doubt very much that I would now be at Swinburne.

However as you would be aware, the Womens Co-op also provided me with the practical skills I needed to undertake study at a tertiary Institution.

Why did I come to the centre?

If I am to be honest I think it was probably the need for companionship. The first subject I studied at the centre was politics. I joined the politics class at the suggestion of a newly made friend, who like myself had an interest in politics.

What I did there?

Well at the outset I had no definite plan to do anything other than politics. However for a number of years I had had a fantasy about one day being able to study at University. (Probably inspired by my year spent overseas).

It had always seemed to be an impossible dream - Why?

1. I had left school in 3rd form.
2. The thought of going back to secondary school (age 30) was impractical and daunting.
3. Child-care responsibilities meant night classes were out of the question.

How the Centre Helped?

1. Day time classes fitted in with other commitments to mothering and housework.
2. The small classes of people near my own age were not as threatening as entering a room of teenagers would have been.
3. Staff and students were supportive.
4. Informal class structure allowed for exchange and development of ideas. For me this was important because I began to feel less isolated and (I hope this makes sense) less stupid, because I often heard people express ideas similar to my own.

What I am now doing as a Result?

I am studying for an Arts degree (part-time) at Swinburne.

Through the Womens Co-op I gained study skills and HSC qualifications I needed to gain entry.

However my intuition tells me that I also gained the self-confidence to give it a go, as a consequence of my Co-op experiences.

I hope I have answered your questions Helen, and I am glad to have been able to take part in your survey.

DAVID

I am an English born Australian in my middle thirties and I have been living in the Blackburn area for the past four years. I am slightly disabled with a disabled wife (C/P and Epilepsy) and three very healthy boys.

I first became involved with Eley Park due to my children attending a holiday program during the school holidays. Whenever I picked them up I would talk to the staff for a while.

I then learned that the Centre has courses each term for those who wanted to learn a particular skill. My wife wanted to learn pottery so she signed up for that course each Thursday morning.

As I was attending the Centre each week to take my wife and pick her up, I thought it would be good if I helped out somewhere, so I became a counter assistant.

Come that September I was asked to join the Committee this was in September 1983, so I did and I served on the committee until February 1986.

While being at the Centre I gained the courage to try and learn something new, so, I had a go at Photography and dark room black and white developing. That gave me the enthusiasm to learn something else so I did Sign Language.

The reason I did Sign Language was to get another badge for my cab uniform but most of all to help other people.

From there I progressed to learning Computer Awareness and Italian through the correspondence school of the Education Department.

It also helped me to the a job on a part time basis with the Centre as the Male *** Office on a salary paid each month depending on the number of bookings each month.

I thank all at the Centre for having such belief in me to do the jobs I was given and for giving my the opportunity to serve the community and the courage to learn something new after having left school quite some time ago, also the opportunity to ear a little pocket money over and above my pension.

I hope that Eley Park Community Centre will go on to serve the community for many more years to come and I hope that their courses remain as popular as they are now.

WENDY

I came to the centre for help with my spelling and English, which I obtained from Beverly Brown she was excellent.

She made me realize I wasn't as bad as I at first thought.

I still have room for improvement. I am now working at Safeways after 25 years of being out of shop work.

CAROL

I joined North Ringwood Community Centre in February 1984, following a suggestion by a marriage counsellor, that I would benefit from a stimulating activity and meeting new people. Reluctantly I joined the T.O.P. English class at R.N. Comm. Centre, forcing myself to face my fear of incompetence, both intellectually and personally.

Having failed in my marriage and parenting, I had retreated from contacts outside of my immediate family and was daunted by the prospect of approaching strange situations which I felt were threatening. I found the staff at the Comm. Centre so friendly and helpful and with the informality of the classes and teachers, my initial fears were quickly dispelled. As I relaxed, enjoying the subject and the company of my classmates, my self-esteem slowly improved.

During the course of 1984, my husband and I separated and I faced the difficulty of adjusting to a restricted lifestyle and coping alone with my emotions and those of my children. Here again I found the staff at the Comm. Centre very supportive and understanding.

In 1985 I again returned to North Ringwood Comm. Centre, enrolling in two courses, T.O.P. Sociology and typing. Shortly after, I suffered an emotional collapse, surrendering my children into temporary foster care, and again began to experience feelings of incompetence, but the Comm. Centre staff were sympathetic and caring, sharing in my difficulties until I regained my emotional stability.

Their assistance in my emotional recovery was invaluable. They were able to offer advice and the services of other agencies known to the centre, and my support systems increased.

I began as a volunteer worker in the Comm. Centre creche, and with the caring help of the creche supervisor, began to feel more comfortable with young children. This also led to my becoming a volunteer with an after school activity group run by a "sister" community centre, and also attending a S.T.E.P. training programme, run by yet another neighbouring community house. I regained both my emotional strength and my children, and now feel more confident as a parent and person.

This year I am again with North Ringwood Community Centre, studying T.O.P. Psychology and Aust. Social History, with the intention of preparing myself for entry into Tertiary study, where I hope to complete a degree in Social Work. I wish to work in the field of family therapy.

Much of the strength and dignity I feel today is largely due to the warmth and caring attitudes of the marvellous staff and teachers at the Comm. Centre and to the wonderful people who share the centre. All have contributed to my growth and enabled me to rebuild the lives of my children and myself.

I support community centres as an invaluable resource, and for their continuing contribution to the growth of communities.

JENNY

I suppose if someone had asked me in 1976 what I expected to be doing for the rest of my life, I would have replied that I hoped to continue with my professional career as a Systems Engineer. This had, in fact, been my main source of fulfilment for the preceding eleven years since completing my Arts degree at University.

But at the end of 1978 suddenly there I was married, and at home alone with a new-born baby. My aim formerly had been to be the 'perfect' Systems Engineer; now I had to be the 'perfect' mother. Although I enjoyed my job, I felt that, for my daughter's sake, I must spend the first two years of her life at home. But who to turn to for stimulation and adult company? My husband, who enjoyed a similar job to mine, was away from home for at least twelve hours a day and frequently travelled interstate and overseas. I had hardly any friends in the area as I had only recently moved here from Sydney.

Then someone told me about Kallista Community House. That was a turning point for me. I dropped in, was given a warm welcome by the Co-ordinators and, after a chat and a look around, I left armed with a Course List. I joined the Bush Walking Group, the Playgroup, and attended various courses and looked forward with eager anticipation to the monthly House Luncheons with guest speakers and time for discussion. I had soon made plenty of friends and suddenly life as a 'Mum at home' didn't seem so bad after all. I did return to my former job when my daughter was two, but only in a part-time capacity and I managed to continue my involvement with Kallista House.

When my daughter was four I fell pregnant again. This time, instead of reluctantly giving up my career, I looked forward to being home again full-time and decided to increase my involvement at the Community House. I joined the Committee of Management, later filled the role of Secretary, and now am Honorary Treasurer. An added bonus of being a voluntary worker at the House is that one's children are always welcome there and my youngest just adores the place. To have one's child either playing alongside or being well cared for in a nearby playroom while doing one's job is an advantage few Mums can enjoy.

I have also become involved in a voluntary capacity at my elder daughter's school, developing a course on Computer Studies. Now, with the help of Kallista Community House, I will be running a course at the House on 'Computers in Schools' for parents. I will be using the course material I developed at the school and the school's computer. The school sees this as an opportunity to enhance its image in the local community and the Community House view this as an opportunity to expand their course offerings.

Over the past seven years, as my involvement in Kallista Community House has increased and my role changed from that of a House user to one of active involvement in the running of the place, I have found increasing stimulation and fulfilment. There is no doubt that, but for the House, I would have returned to work much earlier, probably full-time. Both my children and myself would have been deprived not only of most of the rewards of a close mother-child relationship, but also of the benefits that accrue from real community involvement.

Thankyou Kallista Community House.

MICHELLE

I was 19 years old when I attended a T.O.P. course at Kallista Community House in 1984. I enrolled in the class because I was unemployed, the prospect of finding a job seemed hopeless and I felt that if I didn't do something to regain my confidence, I'd go mad.

The first class was a little frightening when I realised that the other students were much older than I and far more experienced in life generally. However, I was always treated as an equal, my opinions and ideas were asked frequently and people were genuinely interested in what I had to say.

I enjoyed the class immensely, possibly because of the informal surroundings; I don't think I would have settled into an educational institution quite so easily. Sitting in a lounge room, often with an open fire as background music, was very relaxing and gave the class a 'personal touch' that I hadn't experienced previously in my years of schooling.

At the end of that year I was more confident and held a much higher opinion of myself. I had gained enough confidence in fact, to go on and teach courses at Kallista House in music, something I couldn't have done before.

AMAL

I wanted to learn to read and write English to become independent - to be able to do things and go to places by myself. I did not like being different from other people.

With a few breaks I have been learning with the one tutor for about 2½ years.

We commenced with baby books and progressed from there until I am now able to read most things with just the odd word being the exception. I still read slowly but I can read. I can also write but we still have a lot to do before I will be satisfied.

As a result of this learning I think I understand people more and I think they understand me. Before I felt I was in a strange land where I didn't like anyone and didn't talk to anyone. Now I find I like people and I think they like me. I used to be frightened to talk to anyone. Now I find a big change in my confidence when meeting and mixing with people.'

I have even done some part-time work.

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APPENDICES

APPENDICES

- Appendix A Conditions of TAFE Registration of a Community Based Provider
- Appendix B Community Providers Participation Survey
- Appendix C Geographic Location of Community Providers in Eastern Region who Participated in the Survey
- Appendix D Questionnaire - Frequencies of Responses
- Appendix E Sample Covering Letter to Accompany Questionnaire
- Appendix F The Survey Sample
- Appendix G Response to Questionnaire
- Appendix H Reasons for Choosing Centre by Age and Sex
- Appendix I Location of Female/Male Enrolments - Eastern Region
- Appendix J Association of Neighbourhood Learning Centres - Aims
- Appendix K Community Provider Goals and Program Priorities
- Appendix L Summary of Consultation with Community Based Provider Representatives, December 1985
- Appendix M Case Studies

APPENDIX A

Conditions for TAFE Registration
of a Community Based Provider

Category A3 LAC - Local Advisory Committee

Category C

Category E

The following conditions of registration are drawn from the TAFE Board Operations Circular No. 46/84 4th June, 1984.

LAC Local Advisory Committee accountable to TAFE through the Council of Adult Education Act 1981.

Registration in this category has parallel requirements to those applicable to a Category C Provider (See below).

Category C Community based groups which provide TAFE programs and services as their major objective.

It is understood that the primary aim of many organisations will come under the broad heading of "community development". However, recognised Category C TAFE providers would seek to achieve this primary aim through TAFE educational programs. This major thrust is not meant to exclude the provision of a broad range of community services and projects: rather it serves to indicate the central operating focus for qualification as a Category C provider. (Even if the provision of TAFE educational programs is not the central focus, organisations can still apply for registration under Category E for any specific TAFE programs which they operate).

Category E Organisations which offer TAFE programs but which do not have the provision of TAFE as their major activity.

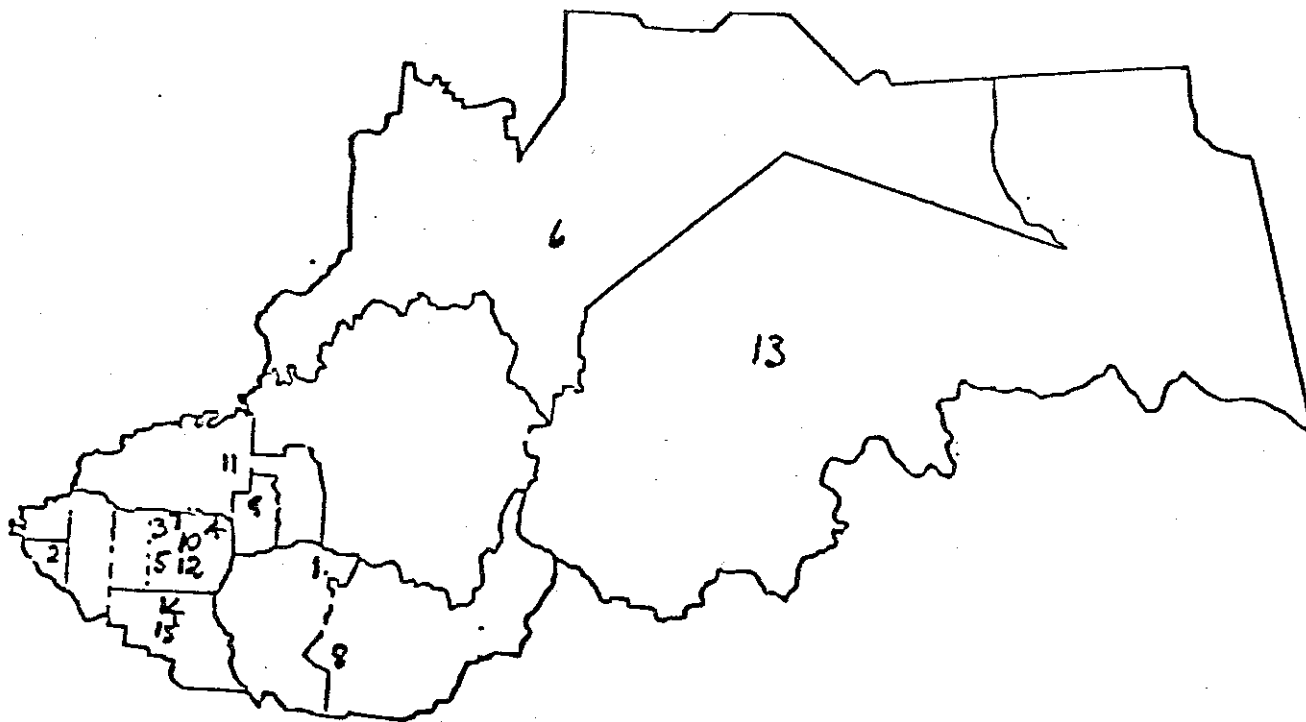
APPENDIX B COMMUNITY PROVIDERS PARTICIPATION SURVEY

Criteria for inclusion.

	<u>SIZE</u>		<u>STREAM</u>		
	<u>400+</u>	<u>400-</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4/5/6</u>
CATEGORY A3					
Healesville Living and Learning Centre	*				*
Upper Yarra Neighbourhood House		*	*		
CATEGORY C					
Augustine Centre	*		*		
Blackburn Literacy Group		*		*	
Donvale Living and Learning Centre	*				*
Mountain District Women's Co-op	*				*
North Ringwood Community House	*				*
Nunawading North Neighbourhood Centre	*				*
POLTA/Park Orchards Community House		*	*		
The Avenue Community House		*	*		
Waverley Adult Literacy Program		*		*	
CATEGORY E					
Arrabri Community House		*	*		
Eley Park Community Centre		*	*		
Koonung Cottage		*	*		
Waverley Community Learning Centre		*			*

APPENDIX C

Geographic location of Community Providers in the Eastern Region of TAFE who participated in the survey.



1. Arrabri Community House
2. Augustine Centre
3. Blackburn Literacy Group
4. Donvale Living and Learning Centre
5. Eley Park Community Centre
6. Healesville Living and Learning Centre
7. Koonung Cottage
8. Mountain District Women's Co-operative
9. North Ringwood Community House
10. Nunawading North Neighbourhood Centre
11. POLTA/ Park Orchards Community House
12. The Avenue Community House
13. Upper Yarra Community House
14. Waverley Adult Literacy Program
15. Waverley Community Learning Centre

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRE - FREQUENCIES OF RESPONSES

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

For most of the questions a number of alternative answers are supplied.

Please circle the number opposite each answer that you choose.

If the alternative answers are unsuitable you may reply in the space provided for "Other".

Space is provided for written answers to some questions.

1. a) In 1983 you participated in the activities of a Community House, a Neighbourhood Learning Centre and/or a Literacy Group.

Which one(s)?

1	Arrabri Community House	7
2	Augustine Centre	54
3	Blackburn Literacy Group	1
4	Donvale Living and Learning Centre	28
5	Eley Park Community Centre	16
6	Hawthorn Community Education Project	--
7	Healesville Living and Learning Centre	14
8	Koonung Cottage	5
9	Mountain District Women's Co-operative	39
10	North Ringwood Community House	28
11	Nunawading North Neighbourhood Centre	38
12	POLTA/Park Orchards Community House	14
13	The Avenue Community House	12
14	Upper Yarra Community House	14
15	Waverley Adult Literacy Program	4
16	Waverley Community Learning Centre	20
17	Other (Please specify)	1

b) People in these groups participate in many ways. In which way(s) did you participate?

	1983	1984-6	PAID	UNPAID
Enrolled in a course/program/ activity	232	129		
Fundraiser	3	5		4
Co-ordinator	5	4	2	2
Committee Member	26	22	1	25
Discussion group member	13	8	3	5
Teacher/Tutor	33	30	21	13
Group leader	6	7	1	8
Other (Please specify)	7	7		

c) Have you given assistance with:

	1983	1984-6
Childcare	26	23
Cleaning	23	19
Clerical work	33	27
Supervising	12	16
Contacting others	30	27
Planning	25	27
Organising activities	23	25
Co-ordinating activities	15	17
Decision making	24	30
Caring for participants	14	22
Other (Please specify)	8	8

d) Which course(s), workshop(s), program(s) were you enrolled in at a Community House, Neighbourhood Learning Centre or Literacy Group/Program in 1983.

NAME OF COURSE(S) etc.

	ENROLMENTS
VOCATIONAL PROGRAM	5
PREPARATORY PROGRAM	107
ENRICHMENT PROGRAM	318

2. People choose to participate in Neighbourhood Learning Centres, Community Houses and Literacy Groups for many reasons. Which three (3) of the following reasons most influenced your choice?

1	Low fees	86
2	Child care available	106
3	A particular course available	193
4	Close to home	131
5	Accessible by public transport	8
6	Friendly, relaxed atmosphere	139
7	Friend's recommendation	30
8	Small classes	27
9	Feeling of equality	18
10	Feeling you could offer assistance	26
11	Being offered a job there	9
12	Saw an advertisement	30
13	Reputation of Centre/House/Group	29
14	Reputation of tutor/teacher	25
15	Other (Please specify)	6

COMMENTS

3 a) It is generally assumed that people gain various benefits from being involved in Community Houses, Neighbourhood Learning Centres, and Literacy Groups.

The most common benefits seem to be:

- educational development
- vocational development
- development of satisfying leisure activities
- personal growth/development.

In your own words, could you explain what each of these terms means to you.

VALUE LABELS

Educational development All learning - 81, Acquisition of knowledge - 90,

Development of skill - 40, Understanding - 22, Broaden Outlook - 20

Academic Work -15, Qualifications -20, Keeping in Touch -4, Meeting People -4

VALUE LABELS

Vocational development Basic Vocational Skills -114, New Vocations Skills -22

Transferrable Skills -70, Commitment to a course - 2, Finding an

appropriate vocation - 5.

VALUE LABELS

Development of satisfying leisure activities Relaxation & Pleasure - 45,

Leisure Skills -99, Social interaction -20, Leisure Knowledge -14,

Greater Awareness - 4, Creativity -20, Quality of Leisure Time -83.

VALUE LABELS

Personal growth/development Development of individuality -7,

Self-Esteem-53, Self-Understanding -55, Life Skills -45, Keeping-up -7,

Confidence -60, Mental Stimulation -16, Positive Attitude -16,

Interpersonal Relationships -72.

b) Your experience in a Literacy Program, Community House, Neighbourhood Learning Centre may have offered you opportunities for these sorts of development.

If so, what sort(s) of development was/were important to you?

	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	NOT VERY IMPORTANT	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
Educational development	51	41	76	19	16
Vocational development	21	39	47	37	37
Development of satisfying leisure activities	55	67	72	29	10
Personal growth/ development	116	55	59	10	3

4. As a result of your experience in a Community House, Neighbourhood Learning Centre or Literacy Group what things did you achieve that are important to you? (You may circle up to nine (9) choices)

Did you?

1	Learn a new skill	161
2	Develop an existing skill	117
3	Get a job	23
4	Get a better job	5
5	Begin formal study	30
6	Continue formal study	18
7	Become more confident	155
8	Become more independent	94
9	Make new friends	182
10	Become a better parent	53
11	Become better at making decisions	64
12	See more clearly what you wanted from life	96
13	Find a new interest	139
14	Become a better community member	71
15	Preserve your sanity	88
16	Find mental stimulation	162
17	Other (Please specify)	12

5. a) Although unpaid, parenting and housekeeping is a vocation and is work.
Do you agree?

1	Strongly agree	189
2	Agree	87
3	Not sure	2
4	Disagree	2
5	Strongly disagree	1

Why/Why not? _____

- b) Has your experience in a Literacy Group, Community House or Neighbourhood Learning Centre helped you in the home in any of these ways?

1	Child care skills	37
2	Nutrition	44
3	Better utilisation of time/setting priorities/increased efficiency	84
4	Job satisfaction	32
5	House maintenance	10
6	Gardening	10
7	Homecrafts	67
8	Money management	8
9	Using new technology (eg computers, microwave ovens)	17
10	Improved health	59
11	Family relationships	87
12	Children's education	26

6. Are you using any of the skills you have learnt at one of these groups in any of the following ways? Do you use these skills to generate income?

RECEIVING INCOME	NO INCOME	
20	22	Making and selling goods
26	18	Teaching
9	32	Caring for others (eg children, disabled, elderly)
7	3	Running a small business
8	5	Being self-employed
27	5	Being in paid employment
10	9	Taking in work at home
2	19	Other (Please specify)

7. a) Have you been involved in any community groups?

	1984-6	1983	BEFORE 1983
School Council	28	18	50
Kinder Committee	21	7	61
Sporting Group	49	34	66
Non sporting club	23	25	36
Charitable organisation	33	23	48
Care of the elderly	20	17	22
Care of the disabled	15	8	17
Discussion group	39	29	49
Church group	59	48	73
Community action group	31	10	23
Local Government	5	2	2
Social Welfare (eg Meals on Wheels)	17	12	31
Management Committee	26	18	23
Playgroup	29	25	37
Other (Please specify)	53	28	46

b) Are you, or have you been involved in running this group(s)?

NAME OF GROUP(S)	SINCE 1983	1983	BEFORE 1983
	108	73	148

8. Do you think that your experience in a Neighbourhood Learning Centre, Literacy Group or Community House has helped you become more involved in the community?

YES	NO
133	111

What relevant skills have you learnt?

1	Meeting skills (eg running a meeting, acting as secretary, treasurer)	44
2	Lobbying skills (eg persuading Councillors, changing a school rule)	26
3	Helping skills (eg caring for others)	80
4	Decision making skills	59
5	Counselling skills (eg helping someone with a problem)	76
6	Administrative skills (eg clerical, receptionist, bookkeeping)	32
7	Communication skills (eg being able to read and write or talk and listen better)	109

9. Are you, or have you been enrolled in any courses at any of the following?

	1986	1985	1984	1983
Literacy group/program	2	3	4	8
Community House/Neigh. Learning Centre	54	65	81	121
School	3	4	5	6
Private institution (eg Business College)	2	5	4	4
TAFE College	12	14	15	16
College of Advanced Education	15	18	15	17
Council of Adult Education	9	19	25	21
University	12	13	7	9
Study with a tutor	5	5	4	3
Correspondence/off campus	4	6	3	5
Other (Please specify)	6	9	6	6

b) If yes, have you received or will you receive a certificate/qualification on completion of this course(s)?

YES NO
90 125

NAME OF CERTIFICATE(S)/QUALIFICATION Degree/post graduate - 36

Diploma - 8 Certificate - 31 HSC/TOP - 15

THESE QUESTIONS RELATE TO YOUR PAID EMPLOYMENT HISTORY AND YOUR EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

10. a) Have you been in paid employment?

	FULL TIME	PART TIME
1986	68	85
1985	75	84
1984	65	79
1983	61	76

Comments _____

b) What sort of paid job(s) have you had?
 (Include self-employment, eg child minding, sale of handicrafts,
 running a small business)

<u>1986</u>	JOB186		JOB286	
	VALUE LABEL		VALUE LABEL	
	Manage-Professional	51	Manage-Professional	8
	Self-employed	30	Self-employed	6
	Teaching	24	Teaching	7
	Nursing	7	Child Care	3
	Child Care	10	Clerical-Sales	8
	Clerical-Sales	38	Domestic-Manual	4
	Home Duties	1		
	Domestic-Manual	7		
<u>1985</u>	JOB185		JOB285	
	VALUE LABEL		VALUE LABEL	
	Manage-Professional	44	Manage-Professional	5
	Self-employed	26	Self-employed	8
	Teaching	30	Social Welfare	1
	Nursing	8	Teaching	9
	Child Care	9	Child Care	3
	Home Duties	36	Clerical-Sales	11
	Domestic-Manual	10	Domestic-Manual	5
<u>1984</u>	JOB184		JOB284	
	VALUE LABEL		VALUE LABEL	
	Manage-Professional	38	Manage-Professional	3
	Self-employed	23	Self-employed	9
	Teaching	33	Social Welfare	1
	Nursing	5	Teaching	7
	Child Care	4	Child Care	1
	Home Duties	2	Clerical-Sales	10
	Clerical-Sales	35		
	Domestic-Manual	9		
<u>1983</u>	JOB183		JOB283	
	VALUE LABEL		VALUE LABEL	
	Manage-Professional	39	Manage-Professional	3
	Self-employed	20	Self-employed	6
	Teaching	29	Social Welfare	1
	Nursing	6	Teaching	6
	Child Care	7	Child Care	1
	Clerical-Sales	29	Clerical-Sales	3
	Home Duties	2	Domestic-Manual	1
	Domestic-Manual	7		

11 a) What positions of paid employment did you hold before 1983?

<u>POSITIONS</u>		<u>YEARS</u>
Manage-Professional	40	1980 - 1982
Self-employed	11	
Social Welfare	2	
Teaching	36	
Nursing	7	
Child Care	2	
Clerical-Sales	39	
Home Duties	5	
Domestic-Manual	7	
Manage-Professional	39	1975 - 1979
Self-employed	6	
Social Welfare	2	
Teaching	40	
Nursing	7	
Child Care	5	
Clerical-Sales	57	
Home Duties	5	
Domestic-Manual	9	
Manage-Professional	38	1970 - 1974
Self-employed	6	
Social Welfare	2	
Teaching	24	
Nursing	9	
Clerical-Sales	75	
Home Duties	2	
Domestic-Manual	10	
Manage-Professional	30	
Self-employed	5	
Teaching	21	
Nursing	5	
Clerical-Sales	78	
Home Duties	2	
Domestic-Manual	4	
Manage-Professional	18	1960 - 1964
Self-employed	5	
Teaching	13	
Nursing	4	
Clerical-Sales	75	
Home Duties	4	
Domestic-Manual	1	
Manage-Professional	5	1955 - 1959
Self-employed	3	
Teaching	4	
Nursing	3	
Clerical-Sales	53	
Home Duties	3	
Domestic-Manual	3	

PAGE 13 CONTINUED

POSITIONS

YEARS

Manage-Professional	9	1950 - 1954
Self-employed	2	
Teaching	5	
Nursing	1	
Clerical-Sales	28	
Home Duties	4	
Manage-Professional	8	1945 - 1949
Self-employed	1	
Teaching	2	
Clerical-Sales	27	
Home Duties	2	

b) What training did you have for these jobs?

1	No specific training	24
2	On the job training	122
3	Apprenticeship	17
4	Business College	57
5	Technical School	26
6	High School	72
7	Senior Technical School/TAFE College	18
8	Teachers College	37
9	College of Advanced Education	29
10	University	49
11	Other (Please specify)	17

c) What level of schooling did you complete?

1	Primary	5
2	Form 1	4
3	Form 2	16
4	Form 3	26
5	Form 4 (Intermediate)	59
6	Form 5 (Leaving)	58
7	Form 6 (HSC/Matriculation)	110

Did your schooling take place in Australia?	YES	NO
	233	52

If no, in which country?

United Kingdom - 29	Asia - 2	Europe - 14	Other - 7
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THIS SECTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE IS OPTIONAL BUT IT WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL TO US IF YOU ARE WILLING TO PROVIDE SOME OR ALL OF THIS INFORMATION.

12. a) How old are you?

1	Under 20	3
2	20-29	19
3	30-39	88
4	40-49	99
5	50-59	43
6	60-69	31
7	70-79	9
8	80 plus	1

b) Sex?

1	Male	43
2	Female	244

c) What is your marital status?

1	Never married	18
2	Married	225
3	Separated	11
4	Divorced	22
5	De facto	7
6	Widowed	6

d) How many children have you?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	or more
Dependent children	114	42	95	38	8	2		1	
Independent children	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	or more
	176	30	40	26	20	5	1	2	

e) What is your country of birth?

Australia - 210	Asia - 2	United Kingdom - 43
Europe - 21	Other - 14	

...PAGE 15...

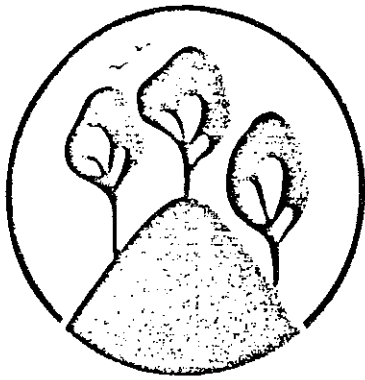
THERE IS SPACE ON THE BACK COVER OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS YOU MAY CARE TO MAKE

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME, WE REALLY APPRECIATE YOUR HELP WITH THIS SURVEY

It is possible that we may need to make further contact with some of the participants in this survey. If you are willing to be contacted, would you please give your name and telephone number.

NAME _____ PHONE () _____

Please mail your response in the reply paid envelope supplied to reach us by FRIDAY 11TH APRIL, 1986.



Mountain District Women's Co-operative Limited

Dear *Participant,*

Our records show that during 1983 you participated in the activities of our Neighbourhood Learning Centre.

Together with a number of other Learning Centres, Community Houses and Literacy Groups in the Eastern Suburbs, we are taking part in a TAFE survey of participants in 1983. We are very interested to know about whether your involvement has affected what you are now doing and whether your experience here has been valuable to you.

Over the last five years especially, Community Houses, Literacy Groups and Learning Centres have increased dramatically both in size and number. There are now nearly one hundred such groups operating in the Eastern suburbs in Melbourne.

Considerable energy and money, both public and private, is now committed to groups like ours. It is very important for us to find out what effects our activities have on people's lives so that we can look carefully at what we do and how we can best plan for the future. We must try to make sure that we do what the community wants and in a way that best satisfies the people who will be involved. This information will help TAFE and other government agencies to assess the needs of community groups and therefore plan for future support for our programs.

We are asking you, as a person who has had experience with us, to fill in the questionnaire which accompanies this letter and return it to us in the self-addressed envelope supplied. All information will be confidential and may be returned anonymously if you prefer.

We would very much appreciate it if you could return the questionnaire by FRIDAY 11TH APRIL, 1986.

Thankyou very much,

Yours sincerely,

CO-ORDINATOR

E. M. Hall

PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR

Wileen Stumblers

TABLE - THE SURVEY SAMPLE

APPENDIX F THE SURVEY SAMPLE

COMMUNITY BASED PROVIDER	TOTAL NO. PARTICIPANTS 1983	ENROLEES		WORKERS				
		SAMPLE SIZE 25% Total (Approx)	STREAM 4/5	STREAM 6	PAID	UNPAID		
Arabbri Community House	123	31		64	11	3	48	12
Augustine Centre	1188	297		1108	80	20	-	
Blackburn Literacy								
Donvale L & L C	524	131	61	424	30	8	9	2
Eley Park Community Centre	334	84	5	291	23	6	15	4
Healesville L & L C	477	119	48	399	5	1	25	6
Koonung Cottage	104	26		103	1		Not available	
Mountain District	595	150	250	271	50	12	24	6
Women's Co-operative								
Maroondah Literacy								
North Ringwood Comm. House	554	136	67	465	16	4	6	1
Munawading North Neigh. House	692	171	210	453	7	2	22	5
Polta/Park Orchards Comm. House	341	85		296	29	7	16	4
The Avenue Community House	177	44		154	15	4	8	2
Upper Yarra Community House	317	79		282	22	6	13	3
Waverley Adult Literacy								
Waverley Community Learning Centre	357	89		318	28	7	11	3
	5783	1442	641	4628	317	80	197	48

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONNAIRE

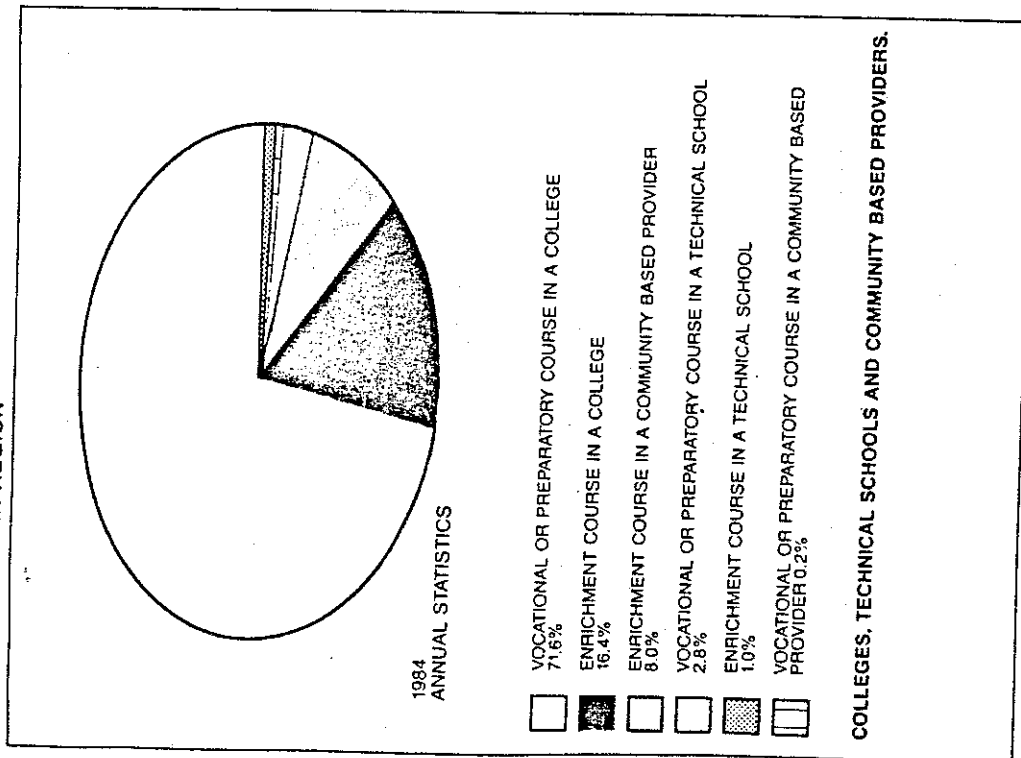
	Number Sent % of total	Number Returned % of total	% Return
Arrabri Community House	31 2.1%	7 2.3%	21.88%
Augustine Centre	297 20.6%	54 18.0%	18.18%
Blackburn Literacy Group		1 0.3%	
Donvale Living and Learning Centre	131 9.1%	28 9.3%	21.37%
Eley Park Community Centre	84 5.8%	16 5.3%	19.04%
Healesville Living and Learning Centre	119 8.3%	14 4.7%	11.5%
Koonung Cottage	26 1.8%	5 1.7%	18.5%
Mountain District Women's Co-operative	150 10.4%	39 13.0%	27.27%
North Ringwood Community House	136 9.4%	28 9.3%	20.58%
Nunawading North Neighbourhood Centre	171 11.9%	38 12.7%	24.05%
POLTA/Park Orchards Community House	85 5.9%	14 4.7%	16.86%
The Avenue Community House	44 3.1%	12 4.0%	26.67%
Upper Yarra Community House	79 5.5%	14 4.7%	17.72
Waverley Adult Literacy Program		4 1.3%	
Waverley Community Learning Centre	89 6.2%	20 6.7%	22.47%
Other		1 0.3%	
TOTAL	1442 100%	300 100%	20.94%

APPENDIX H

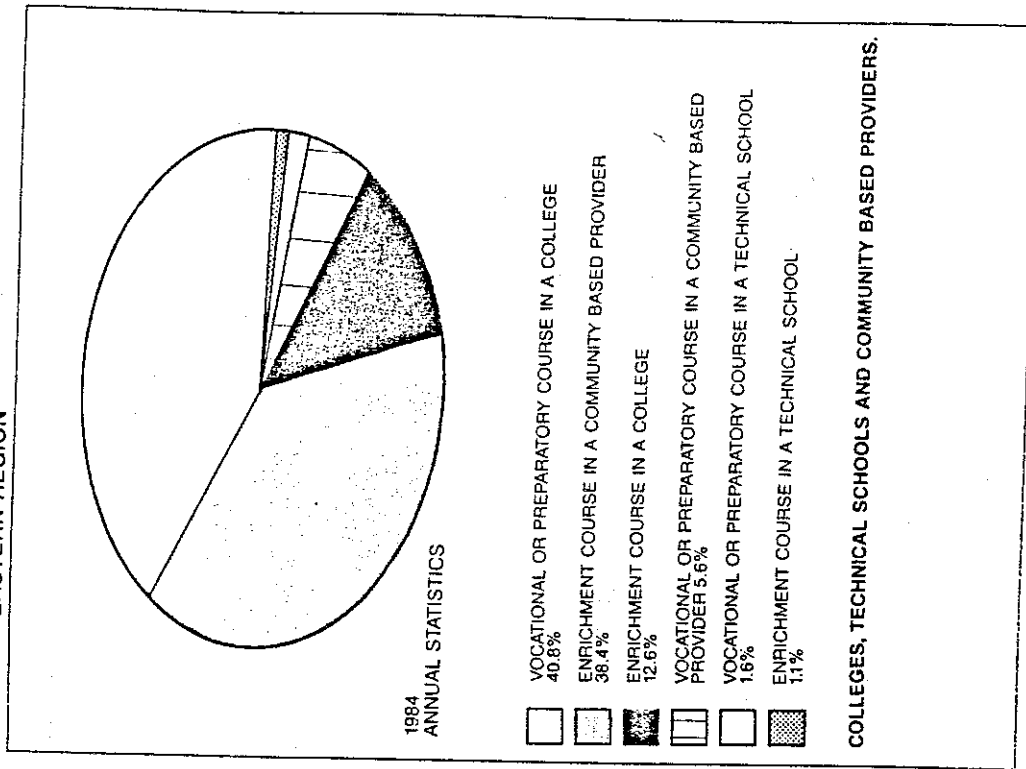
REASONS FOR CHOOSING CENTRE BY AGE AND SEX

REASON	MALES					FEMALES					ROW TOTAL			
	Age in Years	Count Under				Under 29	30-39	40-49	50+	Under 29		30-39	40-49	50+
		29	30-39	40-49	50+									
LOW FEES	1	1	0	1	3	5	6	7	8	6	24	15	83	
CHILD CARE	2	0	1	0	0	6	28	6	0	29.5	41	0	41	
PART COURSE	3	2	6	10	10	14	48	54	41	14.6	185	41	185	
CLOSE HOME	4	1	2	4	6	7	39	40	29	65.8	128	29	128	
PUBLIC TRANSPORT	5	0	1	1	0	0	2	2	2	45.6	8	2	8	
RELAXED	6	2	4	6	7	5	28	36	45	2.8	133	45	133	
RECOMMENDED	7	0	0	5	1	1	11	4	8	47.3	30	8	30	
SMALL CLASS	8	1	0	0	0	1	3	10	10	10.7	25	10	25	
FEE EQUAL	9	2	0	0	2	0	1	7	5	8.9	17	5	17	
OFFER ASSISTANCE	10	0	0	4	3	1	4	6	8	6.0	26	8	26	
OFFERED JOB	11	0	0	0	1	0	6	1	0	9.3	8	0	8	
SAW ADVERT	12	0	0	1	1	1	7	10	6	2.8	26	6	26	
REPUTATION PLACE	13	1	2	7	0	1	3	9	4	9.3	27	4	27	
REPUTATION TEACHER	14	0	0	3	1	1	6	6	8	9.6	25	8	25	
OTHER	15	0	3	1	0	0	1	1	0	8.9	6	0	6	
COLUMN TOTAL	4	8	18	14	16	78	78	65	281	2.1	281	65	281	
PERCENTS AND TOTALS BASED ON RESPONDENTS	1.4	2.8	6.4	5.0	5.7	27.8	27.8	23.1	100.0		100.0	23.1	100.0	

LOCATION OF MALE ENROLMENTS
- EASTERN REGION



LOCATION OF FEMALE ENROLMENTS
- EASTERN REGION



APPENDIX J

ASSOCIATION OF NEIGHBOURHOOD LEARNING CENTRES - AIMS

Aims: This Association believes that Neighbourhood Houses exist for the empowerment of the community

This Association seeks to promote neighbourhood-based philosophies of learning and networks of empowerment.

1. Neighbourhood House/Learning Centres are locally based, provide an integrated range of services for diverse needs of individuals and families and are community directed and controlled.
2. Neighbourhood Houses are the first places to reflect the needs in the community. The people in Neighbourhood Houses would know first what will be the future directions needed in any society.
3. A Neighbourhood House empowers people towards meeting their social change towards a more just and equal society.
4. A Neighbourhood House grows from the expressed needs of the community. It must service and continue to reflect those needs as they change.
5. A Neighbourhood House injects creativity, with ideas, questions and invitations without disturbing the central thread of that community.
6. A Neighbourhood House allows people to take responsibility for their own WELL FARE. It must provide opportunity for the development of self-reliance and growth.
7. A Neighbourhood House supports professional services by providing a space where the community is strengthened and nurtured by supporting individuals in their time of need.
8. Any program instituted by a Neighbourhood House has as its basic tenet access for participants to strengthen, maintain and develop their own style of family/neighbourhood life.

9. Neighbourhood Houses promote the association of people into networks so that the family and individual finds their own level of neighbourhood support.
10. Neighbourhood Houses continue to look to the needs of the disadvantaged neighbour. All the people of a neighbourhood are necessary components for a healthy neighbourhood.
11. A Neighbourhood House provides a space where the giver and the receiver in the neighbourhood can find the limits and mutuality of this relationship.
- 12a. To foster, develop and maintain inter-relationships between Neighbourhood Houses so as to facilitate the growth of a Neighbourhood House movement throughout the State of Victoria.
- 12b. To exchange knowledge and information with each other at a regional and State-wide level.
- 12c. To clarify community-based philosophies of learning, organisation, skill sharing and networks.
- 12d. To move towards wage justice for all Neighbourhood workers.
- 12e. To achieve the provision of subsidised child care where necessary.

CBPs, whose participants were surveyed by questionnaire for this project, are members of the ANLC.

Each CBP has its own Aims Statement while some aims are specific to that provided these, as well as the common aims, are consistent with the aims of the ANLC.

APPENDIX K

Community Provider goals and program priorities.

1. Goals

a) Access:

- To reach the least accessible people, decreasing their isolation.
- Right to open entry.
- Provide ready access through low cost, small group classes supported by child care.

b) Response to participants:

- Retain a "humanising" method of providing education.
- Offer a flexible response to community.
- Venue and environment to be comfortable, informal and challenging but non-threatening.
- Self-directed learning.

c) Autonomy:

- Retain autonomy of provider - self-determination and self responsibility.
- Retain autonomy over choice of tutor.
- To satisfy the needs of the community whether or not these are recognised by funding bodies.

d) Challenge:

Provide a challenge to the future for people to have self control and empowerment.

e) Balance:

Retain a balance through a broad range of classes and other learning opportunities within the organisation.

2. Program Priorities:

Within the general commitment to a broad range of classes, the following were named as current priorities:

- a) Academic and other credentialed courses leading to further education and employment.
- b) Language courses, including community languages and English as a second language.
- c) Recognition of non-formal qualifications of teachers where appropriate.
- d) Providing information resources.
- e) To encourage TAFE to alter criteria to recognise some courses currently termed "enrichment" as being access, vocational etc.

Source: Community Providers in the Eastern Region of TAFE, Seminar March 1986.

APPENDIX I.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION WITH COMMUNITY BASED PROVIDER REPRESENTATIVES, DECEMBER 1985.

Donvale - 10th December,
Koonung Cottage - 11th December,
Wonga Park - 18th December.

Attendance lists attached.

The main issues suggested for discussion were the definition of terms used in the Project's title and the involvement of Community Based Providers in the Project.

Each group was most interested in discussing the definition of terms.

ATTENDANCE

All groups agreed that "attendance" means any sort of involvement at a Community Based Provider such as child care worker, administrator, co-ordinator, assistant, student, etc. because all involvement had an educational and vocational component. That is, people learnt informally, eg. by doing, by being shown, by listening, by watching etc., as well as more formally, eg. attending a course. Also all aspects of involvement could prove useful vocationally, i.e. skills learnt, confidence raised, new possibilities glimpsed, experience gained both in courses and by being involved, either as a volunteer or as a paid worker to do a job.

OUTCOMES

Each group decided that a definition of outcomes would be better left until other terms had been defined since it seemed to hinge on what these definitions might be, therefore Vocational and Educational were the terms chosen to discuss. I have summarised each group's discussion separately.

GROUP DISCUSSION HELD ON 10TH DECEMBER AT DONVALE

Providers were represented from:

Donvale Living and Learning Centre
North Ringwood Community House
The Avenue Neighbourhood House
Arrabi
Waverley Community Learning Centre
Park Orchards Community Centre, and
Mountain District Women's Co-operative Ltd.

EDUCATION

Broadly speaking, it was felt that education is the same thing as self-improvement. Education always involves, (or should involve) sharing which is reciprocal. The most important aspect of education is learning.

Learning consists of:

- building knowledge about things,
- building self-knowledge,
- discovering the extent of one's own knowledge,
- discovery of new knowledge,
- self-discovery,
- discovery of others,
- widening horizons,
- becoming aware of the process of learning.

The process of learning involves recognition of the process of change; that this process is continuous and is at least as important as the content of learning (i.e. what is learnt) and as the outcomes of learning.

Education should be regarded as 'life-long'.

The issue of resources and their provision is an important aspect of education.

VOCATIONAL

The group felt that it was important to distinguish between the traditional meaning of 'vocational' and its non-traditional meanings.

Traditional meaning

Paid work - usually for someone else.

Qualifications - formal pieces of paper.

Career - long term predetermined plan.

Predetermined programs of study and work.

Predetermined goals - narrow focus on achievement.

Updating of qualifications.

Contract education for professional advancement.

Non-traditional meaning

Vocational has to do with the growing process, with personal aspirations, with discovery, which 'fit' between person and what he/she does.

Goals are discovered:

- in an appropriate environment,
- in a non-threatening atmosphere,
- through a communicative process,
- in a support system,
- in the context of a feeling of worth and confidence.

Vocational is not necessarily to do with money, i.e. money is not the most important factor - importance of intrinsic value.

Vocational training (both traditional and non-traditional) is often used and should be available for use for something other than the specified job, eg. plumbing - may want to study it, use it, but not become a plumber by occupation.

"The 'bottom line' is that one learns skills whether in large institutions or Community Based Providers. What these skills are used for is open".

And further,

"There is equality among skills whether certificated or not, i.e. the skill of installing a drainage system is owned by the person and can be applied whether there is a certificate as formal verification or not".

Community Based Provider involvement in vocational training

In a non-traditional sense, Community Based Providers are very involved in vocational training. The differences are:

- can be seen as a trial run,
 - no loss of face or self-esteem if one pauses, stops or bails out,
 - can change easily from one thing to another to discover 'best' area, goals,
 - can move in and out,
 - play different roles, - give and take, - learn and teach,
 - can match with changing life styles and phases,
 - can take control of own learning instead of being directed,
 - flexibility - far fewer presuppositions compared with traditional vocational training - makes learning and vocation possible.
 - can experiment with what may turn out to be pre-vocational education but one is not under pressure as to direction or continuation.
- Community Based Providers become launching pads.

POLTA experience

Volunteer training courses:

- examine values,
- develop communication skills.

Launching paid:

- empowers,
- enables,
- creates movement,
- creates new 'scripts' as opposed to the old which keep people suppressed, oppressed, and imprisoned.

Voluntary and community work:

- legitimate vocation = Community Based Provider work whether paid or voluntary.
- can lead to paid work and perhaps further education.

"Essentially, the process allows for the most miniscule offering of personal skills to lead to a full blossoming".

REPORT OF GROUP DISCUSSION HELD ON 11TH DECEMBER 1985 AT KOONUNG COTTAGE

Providers represented were:

Koonung Cottage
Mitcham Community House
The Avenue Community House
Waverley Adult Literacy
Blackburn Adult Literacy

This group chose to concentrate on the concepts of education and outcomes.

EDUCATION

Education is about:

- broadening of outlook and moving out of boredom
- developing self-esteem
- participation which also involves companionship and sharing
- learning something new
- developing language skills.

All these are essential to the fulfillment of personal potential. With confidence comes the ability to participate in society. For basic literacy students this can mean that they come to feel no longer an outcast but a 'new' person who now has the chance to develop social skills.

Education is about relationships. The one to one of adult literacy provision builds confidence that sometimes allows the recovery of lost or nebulous skills as well as willingness to learn what had seemed inaccessible.

Education is about skills acquisition both non-verbal and verbal.

There is great importance in having produced a concrete object which is an expression of one's creativity. To its author it can mean a justification of existence partly because it satisfies the primitive need of being useful. Self-value is enhanced by the satisfaction derived from 'having a place in society', 'playing one's dues' so to speak.

Education is about:

- meeting challenges
- solving problems

The development of verbal skills, naming things, finding the right word means that one can take control of one's own life. Without the right word one is fearful.

Education is about combatting ignorance. "Ignorance is the greatest fear, not knowledge". Fear of change looms large but this too is fear engendered by ignorance.

Education is about 'putting things from your emotions into your head'. When one trusts and recognises one's emotions one copes with them and is no longer fearful of them. This leads to greater trust, less fear of others and a gradual acceptance that one person does not have to have all the answers. Answers can be shared among people who make them freely available.

OUTCOMES

These include:

- increased confidence
- increased skills
- participation
- higher self-esteem
- improvement in physical and mental health
- talking and being listened to
- being able to listen and respond
- being able to organise and all that this involves
- more whole as a person
- greater job prospects
- willingness to try, tackle things not previously attempted.

Important to this is the environment in which all this takes place.

GROUP DISCUSSION HELD ON 18TH DECEMBER AT WONGA PARK COMMUNITY COTTAGE

Community Based Providers represented were:

Wonga Park Community Cottage

Morrison House

Eley Park Community Centre

Donvale Living and Learning Centre

This group was concerned to distinguish between the educational needs of youth and adults. Satisfaction of different needs require different approaches.

Most schools, catering mainly for youth, reflect the 'front end' model of education. Greater emphasis is placed on preparing students for their future rather than their present.

CBPs embrace the 'life-long learning' model. Education and training is for the present or the immediate future. In passage through adulthood people will encounter change and will themselves change. This change may be social, personal or vocational. Dealing with change usually requires the acquisition of new knowledge, skills and understanding. Education and training are for the present or the immediate future. Both change and education are a continuous process.

VOCATIONAL

Vocational learning and training is a subset of education. i.e. education encompasses the whole life process of learning.

Vocation is the direction taken or aspired to. It may change. In the course of an individual life one may have many vocations.

Vocation may be defined as both paid and unpaid work. Essentially educational and vocational development cannot be separated.

Vocational Role of CBPs

- provide essential opportunities for vocational change
- provide time and space to reassess one's life and directions
- offer support for risk-taking eg. the personal risk involved in moving from being an employee to being self-employed, from being a home-maker to taking employment responsibilities whether the work involved is paid or unpaid
- provide space for choice of direction to evolve
 - through courses
 - through volunteer involvement
 - through paid involvement

CBPs acknowledge their gratitude for help offered by participants. This engenders confidence in the participant resulting in increased self esteem, a more positive attitude to life which increases the likelihood of people moving out into new fields of endeavour including vocational areas.

- provide a non-hierarchical structure in which every contribution and person is equally valued.
- provide flexibility of access
- provide a neutral ground which contributes to breaking down barriers of prejudice and increasing understanding.
eg. among groups who often regard each other with suspicion
 - youth/aged able/disabled, 'Old' Australians/migrants, employed/unemployed.

As participants value themselves more highly (which includes valuing their own work more highly) they are better able to recognise the value of others.

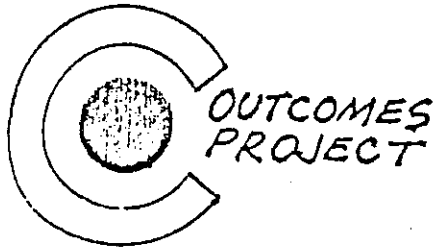
There exists a model of typical progression within each CBP with entry to each CBP taking place at a number of possible points.

Points of entry:

- . Drop in centre
- . Offer voluntary assistance
- . Enrol in course
- . Accept an administrative or teaching position (probably paid)

APPENDIX M

CASE STUDIES



EASTERN
METROPOLITAN
REGIONAL TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION BOARD

TAFE

Suite 3
45 Railway Road
Blackburn 3130
Telephone: 878 0044

28 April 1986

Dear

Thanks for your willingness to arrange some case studies for the Outcomes Project.

One or two case studies from each of the four categories would be very welcome.

We are looking for people who attribute an important role to the centre in terms of

- Category 1. Helping them to prepare for and get a job,
- Category 2. Helping them to begin further study, e.g. at University, College of Advanced Education, TAFE College, etc,
- Category 3. Helping them become actively involved in the community,
- Category 4. Helping them in their personal development, eg. confidence, self respect etc.

It would be best if each person were to write two or three paragraphs about themselves so that each case study is in the person's own words.

This could include

- why they came to the centre
- what they did there
- how the centre helped them
- what they are doing now as a result.

These people need not have attended the centre in 1983 and may or may not have been on the mailing list for the questionnaires.

As far as the Project schedule is concerned we will need these case studies by the end of May.

Thanks very much,

MARGARET

The Nunawading North Neighbourhood Centre or "The House" as I prefer to call it, has played a significant part in my life, commencing in 1976 when I returned to study and completed my H.S.C. as a mature age student. This was made possible by the associated provision of child care by the Centre.

The regular two hour per week classes were a delight to attend with informality combining well with the constructive and positive support given. As an H.S.C. student I also attended evening classes at a local High School and in comparison far enjoyed my learning at "The House". It was not only because I achieved higher results but because women's experiences and needs were important to the process of learning.

From "The House" I journeyed to Monash University and after completing an Arts Degree was thrilled to gain full time employment at the Centre under E.I.P. funding.

During this time I gained many skills relating to the organisation of a community centre and the methods of policy development employed to meet educative, social and welfare needs. By attending meetings on behalf of the Centre, I learnt important principles of negotiation and networking. Through my co-ordination of the Centre's first Women's Economic Summit and the writing of its Report, very useful skills were learnt in the organisation of conferences, the research involved and the administration necessary. The producing of a community newsletter was also a new experience for me.

I believe the education and training I received at "The House" has been invaluable to my gaining and carrying out my current position as Executive Director of Safety House Committees Australia Incorporated, where I am responsible for the overall administrative and executive management of the Association. The researching and formulating of policies, management of staff, arranging of conferences and seminars, servicing of committees and liaising with many government departments and other community groups, are achieved through knowledge and skills learnt at "The House". There is no doubt that, together with my previous skills, the Nunawading North Neighbourhood Centre has significantly contributed to the establishment of my career path.

RUTH

I came to work in the Neighbourhood House under the C.E.P. Working here has given me more confidence and experience in interacting with other people. I've learnt to become more organised and flexible. I'm prepared to have a go at anything. I've learnt to be able to cope when things are hectic and there are many demands placed upon me. I'm more tolerant, and coping with conflict a lot better than I thought. It is hard working here as it is not rigid and there are no regimented rules, and I was used to working in a hospital.

SUE

Through my involvement and work at The Avenue Neighbourhood House, I have been challenged and encouraged to take on further study. I am now doing a Bachelor of Applied Science at Rusden College, on a part-time basis. The House gave me a thirst to gain more knowledge and have more challenge in life. I am certainly doing that now, putting time into The Neighbourhood House, into my own cleaning business and into tertiary study.

LYNNE

I telephoned the N.N.C.C. late in 1985 regarding child care. They suggested a visit to the "House". I took my family along and discussed at length, opportunities available there. Many classes were negotiated for 1986.

Child care was available to me for my part-time job. Phil Slattery suggested I think about doing a course.

I wondered what I would do. Ancient and Modern Myths didn't do a thing for me. Patchwork was out of the question as I was in the ragtrade for years, and do enough sewing at home. Phil talked about the S.T.C. programme. This sounded great but how would I cope.

I visited the house again and co-ordinated the subjects I wanted to do so I would not be away from the children for more than 2 days per week.

Being with them during infancy is vital for me. I decided then to do S.T.C. including 4 subjects, in order to get back into the workforce when the children go to school and having a certificate would enable me to look for something brighter than back to the ragtrade.

The N.N.C.C. has been great for me, meeting new people, broadening my horizons and learning to cope more easily.

The people at the "House" are extremely helpful, there to guide and advise.

At a time in my life when I craved reassurance, I then had to look no further.

My personal life is no longer desolate and studying, while the children are cared for, is very satisfying and rewarding.

SANDIE

I was first introduced to 'The House' otherwise known as the Nunawading Neighbourhood Centre five years ago. Since then, I have 'thanked my lucky stars' on many occasions for such an introduction being made possible. By offering and providing contact with other members of the community, compassion, information, support and educational opportunities, the Nunawading North Neighbourhood Centre has assisted me in various ways since our association, particularly with regards to my accommodation, education, future and employment.

It's hard for me to define exactly which area I've received the most assistance in because all areas are equally important as the other and in many ways dependent on each other. But, the assistance with regards to my employment would take precedence over everything else for without income these things would not be possible.

The Nunawading North Neighbourhood Centre has helped me not only once but several times in finding employment. Firstly, they provided a number of casual positions which at the time were 'a God sent'. And, secondly, if it had not been for their outreach facilities which involves their close contact with self-help groups and other organizations, I would not be working at my present employment.

MAY

Stimulation, personal satisfaction, a building of confidence, thought process, observation and communication, listening and understanding a different point of view. Academic, craft and creative skills, warmth and friendship.

Some of the many benefits the N.N.N.C. ... "The House" has enabled me to experience and learn so enjoyably for the last decade.

It's difficult to believe how miserably alone and nervous I felt as some deep stirring urged me to seek assistance at the "House". In my late fifties, suddenly alone a dark and bleak future stretched ahead. What was there for me? No one needed me now, but I needed something, someone.

I liked to read so I joined the English class. The oldest in a group of young girls and mothers. I left school at thirteen so I was out of my depth. The group and tutor urged me to keep going. Sincere and caring they gave me wonderful support and encouragement, a strong bond developed as we helped each other. I stayed on. What a magical year, I passed H.S.C. English then joined the writing group and a craft group which led to my attending the College of Textiles at Ascot Vale where I received my craft certificate. A wonderful experience.

In ten years at the Centre I have seen so many women helped and encouraged to learn their own worth and go on to further their education.

The friendly caring atmosphere of the "House" in understanding the needs of people whilst gently guiding them toward the path of learning, gives the much needed opportunity to all ages to grow and attain enriching fulfillment.

BETTY

In 1978, whilst a member of the Park Orchards Primary School Council, I was concerned at the lack of educational, social and leisure outlets for the children and adults of this community, and in particular for women at home.

As convenor of the Community-School-Relations committee I organised a multi-media leisure time program to be conducted in the school art room.

The program grew rapidly, and now named POLTA, (Park Orchards Leisure Time Activities), with more courses for adults during the day, evenings and weekend, together with after-school courses for children, meant that I was spending enormous amounts of time co-ordinating them. Skills learnt in applying for funds were improved, as were my "people" skills.

I decided to enrol in a post-graduate course - the Diploma of Community Education at Caulfield Institute, so that I would have a formal qualification for this voluntary work.

Upon completion of the diploma I was employed as a Co-ordinator at Morrison House at Mt. Evelyn, whilst remaining as a convenor of the committee for POLTA, on a voluntary basis.

In 1983 I resigned from Morrison House to return to work at Park Orchards fulltime as the Co-ordinator of the new Community House which I developed 'from scratch'.

Since then the House has developed to the stage where it has 3 part-time co-ordinators.

GWEN

I came to the Donvale Living and Learning centre after a crisis in my life changed its direction. I began to think more seriously about my future and changing careers. The C.A.E. H.S.C. form was delivered around this time and my interest in attaining my H.S.C. was revived. I had done English in 1982 but decided not to continue until the crisis rocked me out of my apathy.

It is my aim to gain my H.S.C. by successfully completing two subjects this year and go on to either further study or a short course designed to teach skills for a job (e.g. office skills). I am presently consulting with a vocational guidance counsellor in order to clarify where my interests and skills lie.

The centre was conveniently located with creche facilities which were important factors in my decision. The classes were also held during the daytime. I was a little hesitant about returning to a classroom situation but the staff at the centre were very reassuring and I have found that it has been a confidence building exercise. I feel these suburban learning centres are a vital part of our society reaching people who may otherwise never take the step to better themselves and are very deserving of the government funding they receive.

VEL

I visited the Park Orchards Community House initially to meet people who share the same interests as I do, and to find out more about the community, because I was new in the area.

Involvement in the day to day running of the house as a volunteer led to taking some of the courses available to tutoring in my special area of interest which was art.

The next logical step was to attend a TAFE College to further my education in art.

VIRGINIA

I came to the Centre about five years ago, feeling very desperate. I live with my Mother, and as much as I love her she was driving me up the wall. I wasn't working so I just had to have an outlet.

Jan came to my rescue, offering me work first of all as babysitter in the Creche, and then some voluntary work answering the phone, which I did on an off for a few years.

Now as a result of this giving me the confidence to go back to study in an S.T.C. course run from the House. I am doing two subjects this year, and hope to do further two subjects next year to gain my H.S.C.

I do hope that this answers your questions.

SANDRA

Like most women who leave the workforce for any length of time to have a family, my confidence was depleted by minimal outside contact apart from with people who saw me only as my children's mother, and so I used Morrison House initially as my contact with the wider world.

In the past eight years my contact with Morrison House has been on numerous levels, as a class participant, a volunteer, a group organizer, a member of the Management Committee, a tutor, and now an STC student. These various roles have restored my identity and self confidence and enabled me to discover previously undiscovered skills which gave me the basis for returning to study in 1984, when I undertook successfully at Box Hill College of TAFE, T.O.P. in Art and Design.

I am aiming now through the STC art subjects I am studying to enter a tertiary college to undertake a Diploma in Fine Arts, with the ultimate aim of teaching art, a goal I would not have considered had Morrison House not given me taste of both.

MARCIA

I first came to Morrison House in 1979 to join playgroup with my 3 year old daughter. I was new to the area and saw this as a way to meet new friends with common interests. As Mount Evelyn is very isolated by transport availability, and doesn't have a lot of facilities close by Morrison House as a Community Centre eventuated. I had experience in Child-Care so offered my services in the creche department. I have continued to be of help in this part of the centre off and on between having my other two children and being involved in other projects. I also have become involved in supporting families in need of voluntary help and this has boosted my own self esteem and confidence.

This year because of the constant encouragement of the people involved in Morrison House I took a giant step forward and returned to Study.

This I hope will lead to College entry and then a paid position, but even if it doesn't I now have confidence in myself and my worth, and I'm sure that in such stimulating and warm surroundings as Morrison House I'll continue to grow.

My purpose in coming to the Fleet St. Centre was to commence further study conducted by the Women's Access Program of Holmesglen TAFE.

I am studying TOP Psychology at Fleet St. and TOP Sociology at Chisholm Campus to assist in realizing my long standing ambition to be accepted for the Diploma of Welfare Studies at Chisholm TAFE for which I first applied in 1985. Although unsuccessful first interview stage was reached. I then recognized the value and importance of two TOP subjects to assist with entry requirements. Also, having done no formal study for thirty years, apart from short courses and seminars, the opportunity to become more comfortable with the student role before moving into tertiary study.

Living in Mt Waverley I find Fleet St. extremely convenient, plus ease of parking which is a major problem at Chisholm (Caulfield).

ROSEMARY

I came to the Donvale Living and Learning Centre for interest and stimulation. I have been at home with young children for the last few years and I (together with my husband) have felt that the type of contact I had with people was very limited e.g. - Play groups and Kinder where the prime topics of conversation concerned children, their development and their problems. I have always been very interested in current affairs and keeping up to date and felt that I was losing 'contact' and starting to 'stagnate'.

I completed my H.S.C. about 13 years ago and felt that I needed to improve my confidence in essay writing and studying techniques before considering the possibility of further study in a few years time.

My family is my highest priority and I therefore wished to avoid the disruption to family life that night school would be with a young family. The centre also has a creche facility attached to it and this made the decision to study much easier.

The two H.S.C. subjects that I have chosen to do involve subjects that have always been of interest to me and I believe will be of benefit in the future.

The centre is located fairly close to my home and this influenced my decision to study - if I had had to travel long distances then I probably would not have started studying till the children were older.

S.F.

In 1979/1980 I found myself in a situation where I was tied in with domestic affairs and personal crisis. In desperation, I approached the North Ringwood Community House in search of some distraction to get me out of the house, away from my problems and involved with other people in my local community. I had nothing more than this in mind when I signed up for a course. After a while I found myself becoming more and more interested in the activities of the Community House and the work being accomplished there. I discovered that the Community House was a significant self-help organisation concerned with personal development, but also extending outward in a true community awareness network.

I saw people from all walks of life developing their talents, extending their education and aspiring, some to University level, which until their association with the "house" they had not even contemplated. I found this all very stimulating and stayed around to help in the office, or wherever else I could be useful.

One morning, I saw an advertisement in the paper requesting applications for a stenographic position with the International Community Education Unit in the Education Department and decided to apply. This decision was based almost entirely on my newly awakened awareness of community education and its far-reaching effects on individuals and, in consequence their children and families.

I was thrilled and excited when I was selected for the position and have now been working as a Secretary with the Ministry of Education for four and a half years.

SIMONE

Eley Park has played a big part in my life as a newly colonised Australian, I had been in Australia two weeks when I heard about this place, I decided to enrol in the ante-natal classes which they had going at the time, I needed the exercise and it was a way that I could meet other young mothers in the surrounding area, both myself and my daughter Jessica were in need of company and this was a step in the right direction.

I liked the place as soon as I arrived for my first class, the friendliness which was displayed to me as I arrived was heart warming, I felt immediately at ease, Margaret came up to me and introduced herself, I explained a little bit about myself and she told me about the centre and the people in it, I liked the place even more, the way she spoke of the people involved in the centre made me realize that this was more like family to her than people that she worked with, it wasn't long before she had me hooked and enrolled as a volunteer supervisor on a Monday.

Becoming a supervisor at Eley Park opened up a whole new world to me, I met a vast array of people all of whom were interested in not only what Eley Park could do for them, but mainly what they could do for Eley Park, what Eley Park has done for me is that it made me realize the more I give, the more I get. It has also given me a greater self respect, I have coped with moving a young family across the Tasman, I have made more friends than I ever thought possible, from the young children in my daughter's playgroup to the senior citizen's who are the new grandparent's my daughter deserves, I know for sure that I wouldn't be able to say that if it wasn't for the people of Eley Park.

After becoming a supervisor at the centre I suddenly found myself on the programme sub-committee, when the convenor Laraine left to go back into the workforce I found the position was all mine, I knew I was really in the thick of things when Judy put a folder in my hands and told me I had six weeks to get a programme done, from start to finish, she was sure that I could do it, so I wasn't about to let her down, after all she was my boss, strictly speaking, it took me four and a half weeks to get it done, I don't think that Judy was really that surprised, I can remember one comment that came out was "Great, I knew you could do it, I wasn't worried for a moment". Imagine I had been in Australia for less than a year and I had built up such trust in these people that they would give me such an important job to do and know that I would do it. The trust and friendship of this group sort of speaks for itself.

Basically what Eley Park has done for me is it has made me feel important, it has made me feel as if I am worth something here in Australia, also it has given me a reputation to live up to, this reputation makes me want to excel, it makes me want to do more for the centre and the people in it, that is why I have joined the Management Committee, and that is also why I am going to get this to Judy tomorrow, she asked for it today, well, the woman said it was rather urgent. Joining the Management Committee makes me Judy's boss strictly speaking, so instead of me making coffee for her we now make coffee for each other.

What the future holds for I do not know, I would like to think that Eley Park and I will stay friends for a long time, I have found out through the work that I have done for Eley Park that I like working with people, I am know now that I would like to go to University to study, perhaps a Degree in Sociology, I might even forefill a dream of becoming a physical education teacher, whatever I decide I know that these people are right behind me, to catch me if

I fall, and I am sure that they know that if one of them should fall that I would be there to pick them up, brush the dust off and to set them back on their feet again. Isn't that what real friends are for.

Eley Park to me is more than just a nice looking building in a comfortable suburban town. It's my Family.

JENNIE

My involvement with the Park Orchards Community House began in 1980. After teaching Secondary Art Craft and Dressmaking for eleven years, I spent a number of years at home with a young family.

I was elected a parent representative on the School Council of my children's primary school. At this time there was a strong movement to use the school facilities out of school hours for adult and children's courses. I actively supported this concept and when after-school additional courses became a reality I taught macrame.

A neighbouring house belonging to the Local Council became vacant and rather than having it demolished was established as a Community House. I helped out as a volunteer in the office of the newly established house, then taught a number of spinning classes. These led to the establishment of an afternoon per week where people were able to use the house to work on their current craft and projects. The craft afternoon concept proved a great success and continues giving fellowship, pleasure and sense of achievement to the ladies and gentleman who have participated.

In Mya '84 I was employed by the School Council for 10 hours per week for 13 weeks as an Assistant Co-ordinator of the Park Orchards Community House. Since then my employment has gradually increased to 16 hours per week.

The duties of the house are shared by four people in paid positions, a Co-ordinator, Assistant Co-ordinator, Administrator and Childcare Co-ordinator.

JUDY

I first became involved with the Community House about three years ago. I started by doing volunteer work on the desk answering the phone etc. After a couple of months I began looking after our after-school program as well as the typing. Our lady who was looking after the book-keeping resigned so I then took over this job. At this time I was paid on an hourly rate both for the typing and the book-keeping as well as any time required for after-school work.

Our Co-ordinator went on leave in August last year and I was asked to help the Assistant Co-ordinator for this time. On returning from leave our Co-ordinator was ill so I stayed on, when she was well again we found it worked very well have three people here.

I was officially employed as Administrator for 16 hours per week at the start of this year.

MARIAN

I, like many other people, first came to the centre when my children were young. It offered a chance to get to know people also a chance to get out of the house, also a chance to learn something new. The House has been my major way of meeting new people within my own area, as I live in a mixed-age area and don't really mix socially with the neighbours.

At the House the courses that I have attended have ranged from practical eg. stretch sewing, vegetarian and chinese cookery to purely leisure courses eg. cera mins, which I still do at home; to leatherwork, pottery and cane work. I have also taught courses. Another area that I have done courses in is personal development. Being a phone volunteer I have attended two courses which greatly helped in building self-confidence, at a time when it was sadly lacking. It is probably these two courses that have helped me most in my studies.

As my youngest child started school this year I realizes that when the time comes to re-enter the job market I might have a problem, due to changes in office. I decided to enrol at Victoria College, Lilydale in an Office Systems course. The course although not very interesting is not very stimulating; but despite this I have amazed myself at repeatedly organising things eg. there is no allowance made for children although all this class has children at home. There are other examples of this lack of forethought also. I have learnt to complain to the right person usually gets results. (I learnt this at the house).

While I am studying at present I don't know if I will remain studying at this course but at least I have had the experience and have confidence in myself to try something new.

JENNI

I had very low self esteem as a single parent bringing up children - always putting my children first. I was run down after my father died. I was referred to Nunawading North Neighbourhood Centre by Mitcham Clinic - NNNC was like a wonderland. That made me begin to be aware of my creative talents. I remember sitting in Gwenda's English, scared to open my mouth, but that was alright! I would have, if given an opening there, done some administrative work but I was still tied into my painting class.

Then I was invited to join the committee at The Avenue Neighbourhood House when it was in its infancy and I found that exciting and time consuming. It was wonderful when my kids said I was never home. It helped me get a perspective on myself and I started putting myself before them. I gained confidence thru being asked to run a class and show my skills; and then being in the office, I regained business skills and felt okay about answering the phone. I felt needed. The Committee was where one learnt to speak up strongly for one's values and opinions - it was hard stuff to stick with it.

It's now not enough for me - I want to do something for myself having done things for other people. I don't think its right for me to keep on learning in a N.H. situation. It's made me strong enough to look at other options. So last year I decided to further my education and sat for H.S.C. english and this year I'm doing H.S.C. art with a view to furthering my creative talents.

MARIE

My association with E.P.C.A. goes back several years.

At the present time I am the secretary of Eley Park Community Centre's Friendship Group, "Chat & Chew", which meets here every Tuesday. This group covers a wide ranging age area.

My involvement actually started with this group. At the time I was very slowly recovering from the shock of my husband's death.

I came here feeling very nervous and uncertain of myself, having lost all my confidence and joy in life.

My contact with the then Convenor of "Chat & Chew", Elisabeth Vass was the "stepping stone" to my gradual re-assertiveness. Elisabeth held out her arms and kissed me on the first day - it was wonderful to be needed and so satisfying .

I came one a week thereafter and received love and support from this group in the most positive manner.

From there I "graduated" to being asked by our former Co-ordinator, Margaret Jack, to become one of the many volunteer Supervisors - doing typing, answering 'phones, filing, etc. once a week. I finally found the necessary confidence to type again and be more useful.

These contacts with E.P.C.A. have given me the impetus to try other ventures outside the Centre which I firmly believe would not have been possible without the constant encouragement, love and friendship showered upon me by so many people within the Centre.

Many times I silently thank Eley Park for all the blessings I have found there.

CYNTHIA

I approached a learning centre because I felt under-educated and the idea of learning seemed more fulfilling than just doing craft courses. Apart from being introduced to new subjects which gave me a broader view of life I found I was not a complete idiot. I therefore became more self-confident and found I was capable of doing much more than I thought I could. I learned the importance of sharing doubts and misgivings with other students, in this way some of us helped each other to survive the new demands placed on us. I also learned to value the opinions of people much younger than me.

The experience of learning broadened my horizons, gave me self-confidence and encouraged me to pursue further studies. Although, at times, I had doubts about my ability, support from both the teachers and other students gave me the courage not only to finish what I was doing but to pursue further study. I am now at Monash University where I hope to get my B.A. majoring in sociology, although my ideal is to obtain a Bachelor of Social Work Degree.

I am studying part time and could probably do more, I am proceeding at a pace which is comfortable to me.

JUDITH

I am a full time homemaker who works part time. I was approached by a friend in 1981 to come along to the Centre and help out on the desk. So began my long association with the Community Centre.

I have supervised on the desk, done a Floral Art Course, joined the Market Committee and also joined Management Committee.

After about 12 months on the front desk, I was asked to help out with the monthly Market and about 3 years later I am in charge of the Monthly Market.

In the time I have spent at the Centre, in meeting new people and doing various tasks and learning about the Centre, this gave me enough confidence to take on the job of Chairman this year.

I have met many people and made many friends in the time I have been associated with Eley Park, the feeling of belonging to a large family is very strong.

TESSA

My work as a convenor at the Eley Park Community Centre has allowed me an interest in my retirement by using some of the skills acquired in business and has given me a sense of fulfillment in contributing to the welfare and happiness of others.

GERRY

My involvement with Morrison House began in 1985, after I became a member of a local peace group. (People for Nuclear Disarmament P.N.D.). This group holds its monthly meetings at Morrison House and it was through fellow members Judith Morrison and Jan Simmons, both actively involved at the centre, that my phone volunteer sessions commenced.

Before becoming involved at the centre, I had a reluctance to approach people about different issues, or involve myself to any great degree in issues that were important, personally. In other words, I lack the motivation to strive for personal goals or achievements.

I believe that the centre has also been of assistance in terms of my own confidence in that meeting people at the community centre, and speaking to strangers over the phone has given me more self-assurance and belief in my own abilities.

Since I came to Morrison House, I have returned to study to complete a BSC, after an absence of eight or more years from University. I believe the self-confidence, respect, and motivation that I have gained through association with Morrison House, have been largely responsible for this.

ISABEL

I have been coming to the Waverley Learning Centre for about 5 years now.

I started off by coming with a friend to an "English for Pleasure" group. I attended this for 4 years, and am now doing a TAFE English Literature Course.

I have always been interested in books; reading has been a great pleasure to me. So my aim was to broaden my interest; to delve more deeply into what I was reading and to share my interest with my friend.

However, I did not, when I started, realize what other benefits I would receive by attending the Centre. Not only did I share my reading interest with my friend, but of course with the tutor and entire group. I learnt to participate in lively discussion; to subdue some of my somewhat "old hat" ideas, and to accept other people's more up-dated thinking.

In a nutshell, I learnt to participate in a group in a constructive way, and to use my brain for other writing than that of a shopping list.

I think that I should mention that I am a retired kindergarten teacher, 70 years of age, and live alone. So the prospect of my becoming a crusty old loner was evident. Therefore, the personal development for me has been of great value. I feel confident to participate in a community group; a group of all ages (very important) and I certainly do not feel (as many retirees do), ready for the scrap heap.

Long live the Waverley Learning Centre.

My association with Eley Park over the past 8 - 9 years has been learning to get along with people, friendship helping to get along with all age groups.

In the early years I helped in Holiday Programs, which I enjoyed very much, working with Co-ordinators, seeing how they cope with the young children, also teenagers.

I have also helped at the market, also helped at the desk, where I have met lots of people.

The atmosphere at Eley Park is always warm and friendly, in which I have made many friends, I hope to continue going down there and helping whenever I can.

JILL

I came to The House to meet people when my child went to school, as I felt isolated and wanted to become independent again. I wanted to get away from home and acquire some new skills. I did Breadmaking, Creative Dance, Typing, Keep Fit, Greek Dancing and Healthy Cooking. I am now the Treasurer and have done office work. I have also learnt a lot about committee procedures. My contact with The House has given me exposure to a wide range of people. It has given me encouragement, challenge, support, caring and acceptance. There are no barriers at The House. I have now applied for a job, have received two good references which boosted my confidence, wrote out my resume, and I feel I have achieved something. I have learnt word processing and spread sheeting skills. The House has given me the opportunity to learn and to try these skills out, which then gives me confidence.

PATRICIA

Having had to resign from my job in February, because of R.S.I., I was looking for something to do to keep my confidence in myself, and to mix with people. The Waverley Gazette ran an ad. for people interested in voluntary tutor training through the Waverley Adult Literacy Program at the Fleet Street Learning Centre. This seemed ideal for me - I could learn to help someone with reading, writing, or spelling problems and at the same time retain self esteem for myself. Who knows, perhaps sometime in the future, if and when I can return to work, this may be of some assistance.

I have finished the training program and was able to join a class at Fleet Street to fill in while the teacher-tutor was away. It is a nice feeling to know you are able to help someone, and I hope soon to have a student on a one to one basis. Attending the annual meeting of the program, I offered further help and am now the Publicity Officer on the committee.

Also at the Fleet Street Learning Centre, I joined a class call Literature and Society. This is a very enjoyable group - reading and discussing various books, and writing essays etc.

These activities are of great benefit to me, both educationally and socially. The big plus is knowing one can be of some help in the community of Waverley.

SUSAN

We moved to the area at Bayswater North in January 1982 and began to use Arrabri Community House in 1983 when our eldest child joined the playgroup. During 1983/84 our use of the centre was limited to playgroup and the infant welfare centre.

Then in late 1984 I replied to an advert for tutors and became a tutor of perceptual motor co-ordination in pre-school children, this increased my involvement with the centre and community. But 1985 not only was I involved in tutoring, both of my children were enrolled in playgroups and I was participating in some of the adult classes offered.

As a result of my use of the centre and involvement with Arrabri I have become more aware of the area in which we live, a more active member of the community and find the centre a real hub of activity, offering in as many ways as possible to serve the needs of this particular community.

BARBARA

For nearly two years I have been part of the team at the Park Orchards Community House - firstly as a Child Care Worker and this year as Child Care Supervisor.

I enjoy working at the House and in particular with the children and it has also given me the opportunity to add to the family purse which I have appreciated.

Time spent at the House has been valuable indeed - it has broadened by outlook and thinking and has helped me to gain confidence and more importantly it is teaching me to stand up and be myself - warts and all.

GAYLE

I came to Morrison House originally to do a STEP course. I felt I needed some help with my children and my life. I met a group of girls who seemed to be in the exact position I was. It was very reassuring to listen and receive help from the group.

Now that I am on phone roster I feel it has helped my self esteem in that I could still answer phones, type and do general office duties just as I used to when I was working. Eight years is a long time to be at home and I was becoming a little insecure with the thought that I may want to work once more, yet had had no contact with other people or the type of work I used to do.

I have recently completed a Leaders' Step Program and I have definitely felt my self esteem rise. I feel quite good about myself and am really anxious to help other parents in STEP groups. I feel that Morrison House has enabled me to want to help other people.

ie. Step Leaders Course.
Outreach Scheme.

I don't feel I could do further study in advanced education as it doesn't seem to involve other people. But, I'm not saying that the possibility of a computer course couldn't be in the wind.

In closing, I'm delighted I found Morrison House and that I am able to help out there.

With my little girl in the creche for those couple of hours I feel I am my own person again.

MARY

At The Avenue Neighbourhood House I have come across a wide range of people, and now feel more relaxed with older people. I am able to relate with them without imposed circumstances. I have confidence with relating to many different people.

ANON 1

The Nunawading North Neighbourhood Centre has opened up a whole new world for me. Previously I had never dreamed of going back to school to do my STC.

I am studying English, Community Development, Media Studies and Psychology. I am enjoying it immensely, the teachers are extremely helpful and I am gaining far more confidence in myself.

The women in child care are wonderful with the children, my three year old daughter looks forward to her visits there, plus it gives her a chance to mix with other children.

I have made a lot more friends since being at the House, sometimes just talking to the other women helps you cope with your own problems.

ANON 2

I am the 40 year old mother of 11 and 14 year old sons and have been involved with the Nunawading North Neighbourhood Centre since my second son started school.

I came to the Centre to learn Italian. That is the name I put on it, but the real reason was to get out of the house and to do something with the brain that was slowly rusting.

The Centre has changed my life in many ways, not the least of which was the development of self-confidence and feeling of being worth something to the community. This new image of myself has led me to participate in many areas I would not have thought possible.

I have been a member of the primary school council for three years, Convenor of the school Parents' Association for the same time and Vice President of the local Safety House Scheme since its inception four years ago. I recently participated as a member of the team evaluating the reading, literature, library and research areas of the school curriculum.

Any contribution I have made to my community certainly is due to the support and encouragement I have received from the Nunawading North Neighbourhood Centre.

VAL

Has five children. She first came to the House in response to an ad. in the local paper asking for a childcare worker three years ago.

At first there were only two children at any one time, but the creche built up gradually. I couldn't remember names, or put faces to names and there were lots of faces and lots of names. It took me awhile to get used to them all.

After D left and D came I tried to step back and let her be the co-ordinator but I wasn't going to let the creche fall into a hole, because D wasn't doing her job so I became more confident and started walking into the office and talking through problems. I can talk and stand next to anyone now. When we had all the problems with Kay, I couldn't have coped without the office staff.

I got experience of interviewing people which I had never done before. I think I could talk to the Prime Minister now and never think twice. When the Mayor came I was able to drag him into the shed and say "Would you like your child to play in this shed". I poke my nose into everybody else's business, answer the phone etc. I feel more pleased with myself now.

VINA

Although I am well past three score and ten years, the Community House has provided new interests and activities, making life full and interesting. The atmosphere in the house is always warm and friendly and everyone can participate in the activity of their choice.

I have conducted a class in oil painting and the students enjoyed the friendly atmosphere and dabbling in a new skill.

FRANCES

I first came to the Centre in 1983, 2nd Term to do a Volunteers Course with Yvonne Reid. I had been recommended to come here by Doncare, as I had become a very withdrawn person, afraid even to leave the house. After the Volunteers Course I felt I could handle something else so I did a Communication Course also with Yvonne Reid.

I asked one day if they would like some help with the typing. The Co-ordinator, Anne Balfe, said she would be pleased to have me come and help. I began coming here on a Wednesday and as well as that I enrolled in the English for Purpose and Pleasure class which is held on a Thursday morning.

It seemed Wednesdays couldn't come around fast enough. I thoroughly enjoyed coming here and was gaining more confidence all the time. I began staying after class on a Monday and then on a Tuesday until I was coming here every day. My family were quite amazed at the change in me. I was confident, outgoing, talkative, quite different from the way I was when I first nervously walked through the front door. I also lost six stone in weight which helped with my self esteem as I was 16 stone when I first came here.

The Centre has been for me, a new lease on life. I am currently doing 3 courses as well as coming out to help with the typing. Anne and Jan have made me feel part of the Centre and I am also on the Working Group Committee. It is such a friendly place, warm and cosy it's just like a home away from home. I no longer feel that my life has no purpose. I feel I can pass on to others some of the warmth I have received here.

JOAN

My reasons for attending the Community House Centre

I decided to 'update' myself with Australian Educational Standards having been educated in England many, many years before. Both of my children would be entering into the high school system and I wished my knowledge of the education system to be current.

At the community centre I was able to take up various subjects English, Media Studies and Australian Social History in an atmosphere that was both friendly and secure, by that I mean being a mature aged student I was able to come to terms with this 're learning' in familiar surroundings with women with similar backgrounds, married, children, my own age group etc., plus, and it was a big plus teachers who were always encouraging and helpful.

I returned to the work force again after 12 years absence and finished my fourth T.O.P. subject, Sociology at Croydon Night School.

Although I am not actually using my subjects in my work, I have no doubt it gave me more confidence when applying for a position.

The importance of a community centre, whether for learning skills such as the crafts or in the academic field, should not outweigh the greatest contribution of the centre and that is bringing all sorts of people, ages and nationalities together in a friendly and warm atmosphere on completely neutral grounds.

My many thanks to the community centre and all who participate.

JAN

I first came to the centre when my daughter was nine months old. I had worked full-time up until her birth and wasn't really enjoying the isolation and loneliness that being a new mother in a new suburb meant. I enrolled in a self awareness course and through this was able to recognise my strengths and weaknesses and thus prepare goals for my own self development.

After the course finished I realised that one way in which I could achieve my goal of building more self confidence, was to become more involved in the centre. I wanted to eventually return to the work force and needed to build up skills in many areas. One way in which the Centre helped was to provide an environment where I could put my skills to the test without much judgement - in fact with a great deal of encouragement.

Through this I not only practised and developed my clerical skills but built up a working relationship based on confidence and trust. I think the knowledge of my being needed in this capacity, as separate from my role as a mother, was central to my growth in self esteem.

I now work on a paid, part-time basis at the Centre and enjoy it very much. I feel my skills are developing daily and know that all I have learnt here will stand me in good stead for future employment opportunities.

BARBARA

I hope the following information will help in your work study. Arrabri Community Centre I can honestly say has played a great part in all 4 Categories for me. My story is not uncommon, we have been in Australia for 4 years and after working for the first 2 years I was suddenly left at home feeling very lonely and isolated and after 4 months of feeling like this and losing all my confidence I decided to do something about it. So I took the first step and walked round to Arrabri Community Centre. They had started up a Coffee Morning which I found quite strange at first, but I kept going, then I started helping with the children's holiday activities, still getting to know more people all the time, then in the later part of last year I become involved in The Management Committee of Arrabri which has helped me tremendously in the way of I have got my confidence back to start work again, I am learning all the time, I am very actively involved in the Community, and most importantly it has helped in my personal development. The best thing about Arrabri is that everything I am involved in, Emma my 2 year old daughter is too, which means I never have to leave her. I am also helping in the Resource Centre and soon we are hoping to start up a Drop-In Centre to encourage other people who felt in the same situation as I did, that if they want to get out, there is somewhere for them to go. To me Arrabri Community Centre is my lifeline and without the help of Angie the Co-Ordinator and the many other people I have met I would feel totally lost.

JUNE

A STEP FORWARD

When the Adult Literacy Programme was published in our local papers, my hope became a reality. Through this programme I came to know a very good tutor, who taught me English and gave good advice. Through my tutor I began to enjoy by reading more English novels and visiting the Nunawading library more regularly, above all it has helped to open my eyes to see the importance of good spoken English, after all we are in an English speaking country. So through this programme I am a step forward.

ANNE

I became involved with the Park Orchards Community House two years ago as a volunteer office worker. I had spent seventeen years completely dedicated to raising a family and had moved into a new and lonely neighbourhood. During that time my life became a series of personal problems and I will always value the endless help, understanding and friendship I have received through the Community House during that time.

It opened avenues to me I did not know existed and gave me the chance to relate to people of different age groups, broaden my outlook and share my growing pains and ideas. Access to interesting, educational reading matter was always available.

I attended a variety of interesting craft classes and eventually was able to share my own skills by tutoring classes. I participated in a Communication skills course which was an exciting experience.

My confidence has reached the stage where I can now speak at meetings, hold a confident telephone conversation, make application for part time jobs, attend interviews and look forward to attending the Women's Learning Centre next semester.

YVONNE

I came to Arrabrie because I was new to the area and the state and needed to make contact with other adults as I didn't have any friends and relatives living near by.

I did a keep fit class initially. I then started helping them (Arrabrie) on a volunteer basis in the office and also with school holiday activities.

Being involved has helped me overcome debilitating shyness and has given me the confidence to teach others and has made me a better communicator.

I am now an active member of the management committee, co-editor of the community newsletter, and am giving serious consideration to running for council after I've completed a further education course.

I would never have dreamed of doing any of the above if it hadn't been for Arrabrie.

MICHAEL

I'm writing to you to express my view for your survey.

I prefer working on one to one basis with a teacher. This gives me more time to concentrate on learning English. When I was with a group of young people there was a lot of interruptions from them. They didn't really concentrate on the lessons.

My biggest problem was that I didn't understand the fundamentals of spelling I had missed out on the phonics and rules I needed.

At the same time it is helping me with my writing. My sentences have improved, grammar, reading and my confidence in writing has also improved. As I continue I will use the language more confidently.

MARA

There are a number of reasons why I came to the centre and C.A.E., my main reason was to improve my Spelling and Reading to the point where it didn't embarrass me and make me look stupid. Also to be able to read fluently to my children and to help them. As I do not want them to have the same problem as I, it is such a disadvantage and holds you back so much specially if you are an ambitious person.

The things we do are read out loud, spelling and discuss problems I might come up with during the week (this is to do with the English language problems). At C.A.E. I am doing a Spelling course, and we are working through a book called Learn to Spell by W.D. Wright, which is helping me with my sounds and confidence as I see with my own eyes that there are other people with my problem.

The centre and C.A.E. have helped, by having someone push you that bit more to read and write: being more efficient at looking up a dictionary; just being able to cope better, and to sit for entrance tests and I.Q. for jobs (Westpac and Telecom). I know for myself to improve I must read and put the English language into practise. So doing courses at C.A.E. and having some one from the centre helps in this way plus I like it. Eventually I would like to do my H.S.C.

What I am doing now is not really a result of the centre or C.A.E. It is more due to T.A.F.E. typing course I did. I am working as an invoice typist stock control on a V.D.U. at Sportscraft.

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