



# PEACEFUL WARRIORS

## Caseworker's Pack



BOYS NEED SUPPORT ON THEIR  
JOURNEY TO MANHOOD



Dear Caseworkers,

My name is Damien Litchfield and I am the co-ordinator of Anglicare Victoria's Peaceful Warriors program (PWP).

The PWP is a fortnightly group mentoring program that runs for two (2) school terms. I am passionate about this program and am excited about the opportunity to be able to support young men, such as those you are working with, on the journey to manhood.

The PWP Caseworker's Pack, together with the referral form and brochure, have been created to provide you with all the necessary program information in one convenient package.

There is information for you, as caseworkers, regarding:

- The program aims and outcomes.
- Information regarding the referral process.
- Information outlining all aspects of the program that can be passed over to the young person's parents or legal guardians.

We at the PWP, look forward to supporting the young men that you refer to our program and assisting them in navigating their journey to manhood.

If you have any questions regarding any aspect of the program, please do not hesitate to contact me via any of the below listed means.

Yours Sincerely,

**Damien Litchfield**

Peaceful Warriors Co-ordinator and Youth Counsellor

Anglicare Victoria  
Lilydale – Eastern Region  
47-51 Castella Street  
Lilydale 3140

T| 03 9735 4188

F| 03 9735 1724

E| [damien.litchfield@anglicarevic.org.au](mailto:damien.litchfield@anglicarevic.org.au)

## 1. GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

### MISSION STATEMENT:

To provide mentoring opportunities and support programs to 'at risk' boys in the Shire of Yarra Ranges and surrounding local government areas. To help them develop a healthy understanding of masculinity. To develop more community awareness around the needs of boys in this age group and the important roles we have in helping boys meet these needs.



### VISION STATEMENT:

Many boys in today's society live without healthy male role models. It is our vision to mobilise men within local communities to should the responsibility of supporting 'tomorrow's men'.

Staff within the men's program feel very passionate about that they do. The following point give some background about why this work is so important.

It has now been well established that boys need men in the lives to be able to grow with confidence into manhood. Boys need positive and consistent role models who can provide reference points for learning about adult masculinity.

### Why we do what we do:

- Young boys are increasing growing up in families where there is less contact with appropriate, positive men. This is due to increased rates of family separation, resulting in most children remaining with their mothers.
- Peaceful Warriors Programs target the 9 to 12 year old boys at a formative and vital stage in their development as they begin forming their masculine identities.
- There is a noticeable lack of positive male role models in the lives of 'at risk' boys.

- Boys in the 9 to 12 year age group are often under represented in support services, yet from the age of 13 onwards they are over represented in activities that place them at 'increased risk' of drug and/or alcohol use, crime, homelessness, suicide and school refusal.
- Increasingly, the broader community is beginning to understand the value and importance of men's role with children.
- Men, in their role as mentors, benefit from training and resources that the Peaceful Warriors Program provide. The boys benefit from their involvement in the services and the program provides multiple approaches to target the pertinent issues and needs of the boys as they mature into manhood.
- The program benefits boys in their transition to manhood by helping them develop responsible and nurturing relationships with the men, each other and the broader community.
- Men who participate in the program, gain skill and confidence in their role as support for the boys. These skills and increased confidence, are able to cross over to other relationships the men have.
- A preventative model works to address the fact that many 'at risk' boys often don't possess good relationship skills.
- The program is designed to help boy negotiate the often challenging journey through adolescence.



## **2. PROGRAM REFERRAL INFORMATION**

### **PARTICIPATION CRITERIA**

*Note: the Peaceful Warriors co-ordinator is happy to discuss the needs of any boys you are considering referring to the program.*

**The following factors will be considered when assessing referrals to the group:**

1. Age. The group has been established for boys aged between 9 and 12 years.
2. Boys will need to have some ability to ‘stay with the group’ – *this means staying seated, remain focused and being non disruptive* – during discussion times, which range from 5 to 30 minutes. Boys also need to have an awareness of their own needs, and those of others, in terms of basic safety. The group best matched the needs of boys who are either pre adolescent or in the first stages of, or entering a transition period to adolescence.
3. Priority will be given to boys who have an identified need for an adult male role model, due to either the absence of same or the presence of an inappropriate and/or inconsistent adult role model in the boy’s life.
4. There should be no factors – in terms of health and welfare – that would preclude a boy from participating in an outdoor camping experience and from engaging in at least some of the activities of the camp.
5. There needs to be an identified potential for a boy to benefit from the Peaceful Warrior experience.
6. The referred accepts that one of the goals of the groups is to help develop in the boys, their own internal behaviour controls. The focus will be on assisting the boys to recognise the choices before them and learn to make helpful choices about their own behaviour encouraged by the relationships and interaction with the men. The philosophy of the program is to ‘influence through relationships’ rather than to use power and control techniques.
7. Referral may include boys who are demonstrating some difficulty in managing strong feelings - such as anger, fear, sadness etc. – that may influence their ability to engage with others.
8. One to one counselling may be offered to a boy, in addition to his participation in the program, and if this is offered, the referrer and carer agree to facilitate the boy’s attendance.
9. Program staff may request a meeting with the parents/carers or referrers before a boy commences the program.

**Further considerations:**

- The PWP supports and encourages appropriate adult male relatives and family friends of the boys selected for the program, to participate alongside the other volunteer men.
- Special consideration by the PWP co-ordinator needs to be given around the needs of boys who have exception health or welfare concerns. Please discuss these needs with the PWP co-ordinator as the program has a policy of including boys with diverse needs.
- Staff and volunteer men utilise a positive, encouraging, experiential and strength based approach to support boys to accept responsibility for their behaviour.
- The boy's safety is the priority concern for staff.
- Limits are set around boys' behaviour, however, with this client group total compliance at all times is *not* expected.
- The program philosophy is '**challenge though choice**'.