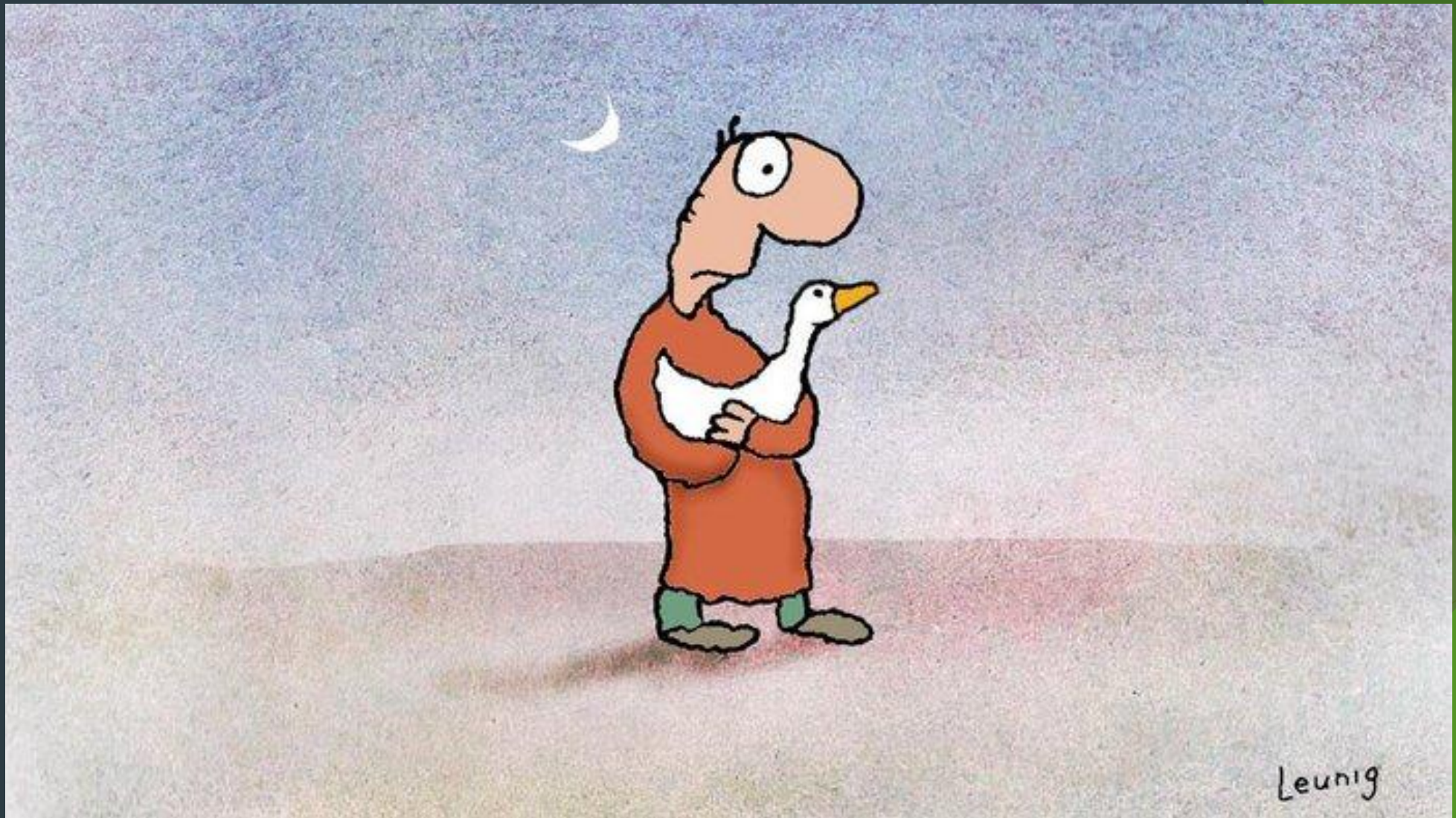


# Flexible Learning: Supporting the wellbeing of our young people

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Melbourne City Mission





# How FILPS can make a difference in the lives of the most challenged....

- ▶ Two questions for you the audience to think about during this presentation.
  1. Can education improve the wellbeing of young people?
  2. Can education target and 'hold' the most at risk, the most on the fringe, the most disadvantaged, the most disconnected - and if so what must it do to enable this?

# Melbourne City Mission - a brief history



# Melbourne Academy - A Brief History

- ▶ Started in 2011 with one classroom
- ▶ Strong focus on wellbeing
- ▶ Grown every year
- ▶ In 2015 SKYS merged and joined Melbourne Academy
- ▶ Now at 9 classrooms across 6 sites (including 2 Young Mums classrooms)
- ▶ Plus two outreach programs (VCAL Online and Connect Youth)

# Case Study - Don

- Don is a 17 year old male who lives in Melton with his mother and 3 siblings. He was living in Ballarat with his father until he came home one from school one day to find his father had moved out of the property and changed the locks without telling him.
- As a result Don was forced to move to Melton to live with his mother. This was very disruptive for him as he had lived with his father for many years and had been attending school in Ballarat.
- Don remained disengaged from education whilst settling into his new life with mum. He came to the Melbourne Academy in 2012 and had impeccable attendance for the two years that he attended.
- During Senior VCAL identified mechanics as desired pathway. Enrolled in Handbrake Turn at this point and then moved into a mechanics apprenticeship. Doing really well.

# Case Study - Mike

- ▶ Mike is an 18 year old male. He has been with the Melbourne Academy since 2014.
- ▶ Badly bullied at mainstream- lead to serious deterioration in his mental health. This led to several visits to inpatient units over the past 2 year. On one occasion transported from the classroom to hospital by the CAT team.
- ▶ Melbourne Academy staff worked closely with his mental health workers and family to ensure he keeps himself safe. Daily phone calls to Mum. Youth worker called and ran Care Team meetings.
- ▶ Mike engaged well with lessons and in a range of creative projects whilst at Melbourne Academy - very creative.
- ▶ Just graduated with his Senior VCAL Certificate.
- ▶ Mike has now applied to university to study Teaching in 2016!



# Issues our young people face

- ▶ Multiple and complex needs
- ▶ Homeless or at risk of homelessness
- ▶ Mental Health Issues (diagnosed and undiagnosed)
- ▶ Poor or difficult school experiences
- ▶ Low literacy
- ▶ Alcohol and Drug issues
- ▶ Complex family relationships
- ▶ Caring responsibilities
- ▶ Pregnant and parenting

# Model - Educator and Youth Worker in the classroom

- ▶ Key component of our model and success
- ▶ Provide a space for wellbeing needs to be met as well as academic
- ▶ Educator/Youth work matching crucial
- ▶ Work collaboratively on curriculum development
- ▶ Engagement through relationship development
- ▶ Use creativity to engage



# Melbourne Academy wellbeing processes

- ▶ Detailed information gathering at enrolment
- ▶ Fortnightly wellbeing meetings for each classroom
- ▶ Regular case notes and tracking of all referrals
- ▶ Wellbeing reports completed each term
- ▶ Trends and emerging issues identified
- ▶ Relevant and targeted PD delivered throughout the year
- ▶ Secondary Consultation/Peer Supervision

# Wrap around wellbeing supports - co location

- ▶ Classrooms co located with other youth services -
  - ▶ Visy Cares Hub (Sunshine)
  - ▶ Frontyard (King St)
  - ▶ Youth Precinct (Nth Fitzroy)
- ▶ Strong connections with youth services in the community
- ▶ Connection to varied networks across varying LGA's
- ▶ Regular wellbeing team meetings

# Alumni Program

- ▶ To provide an ongoing community for ongoing connection
- ▶ To provide a single entry point for crisis support
- ▶ To identify common issues and develop workshops to address them
- ▶ To track destination data

# Take away message

- ▶ Wellbeing and curriculum delivery working hand in hand
- ▶ Education delivery as a means to establish relationship, get 'face time', work over a long period of time and gain a qualification/skills!
- ▶ High level of expertise of wellbeing staff
- ▶ High level of investment in wellbeing staff
- ▶ High level of connectedness to other wellbeing services.

Thankyou!

