



**Jane Barr**

3840 Our Learning Place



# About Berry Street

## **Vision:**

Berry Street believes that all children should have a good childhood, growing up feeling safe, nurtured and with hope for the future.

Berry Street began in 1877 and is one of Victoria's largest independent child and family services organisation.

Berry Street came to Morwell in 1994. It has been a part of the lives of individuals and families across all ages in the community for more than 20years, and a Learn Local Provider since 2004 – Community Education.

Berry Street works across the whole of Gippsland providing care, advocacy, and support for approximately 2,500 young people and adults every year.



# The Challenge

This is a story of a journey so far, a story of hardship for a small town located in the heart of Latrobe City.

Once a thriving community, celebrating manufacturing, mining and production. Employment for young people, men and women was high.

The privatisation of the power industry, closure of manufacturing and production throughout the 1990s saw the community's population plummet.

GippsTAFE became unviable and closed down its Morwell operations. Morwell Neighbourhood House withdrew as a Learn Local Provider.

Morwell was the centre of the worst Mine Fire (2014) an ecological disaster in Victoria's history.

The have not's divide became wider. The Community withdrew.



# Response

- Berry Street funded by RE Ross undertook a scoping study, “Latrobe Valley: Our Children Our Future Scoping Study”.2013 building on 20 years in the local community
- ACFE commissioned the revitalised Gippsland Learn Local Project, which saw more than 27 Learn Locals and their key stakeholders surveyed and engaged in what would it take to revitalise Learn Local in Gippsland
- The scoping studies examined the challenges facing the Morwell community
- Explored characteristics of effective community strengthening approaches to respond
- Berry Street also commissioned a literature review of effective community engagement principles and evidence based programs that promote community involvement exploring the notion of ‘Place based approaches’

The two reports identified the following which underpins our current approach and focus toward:

- Relationship-based “community voice”
- Partnership-based – ensuring meaningful and joined
- Involve ecological Place-based – system focus and build on strengths of the community and engagement at a grass roots level
- Whole of community inclusive of all members and with other key stakeholders
- ACFE and Department of Education, Child Youth Area Partnerships, schools., DET and Latrobe City Council, local services and networks



# The Concept of Place Emerged

- Our approach was to ensure that this project was underpinned by the belief in the empowerment, resilience, courage and strength of the community of Morwell's children, young people and resident families
- Our hope is to bring about positive change for the families of Morwell through Learning and have Morwell become a place of opportunity



# Hope for the future

## Using an Collective Impact Approach

### Key messages throughout communications are:

- Creating a ground swell of hope filled, change of culture towards being strength based and future focussed.
- Capture the “voice” of our community members to include their ideas, hopes and dreams.
- This means that we will tap into resources to identify and articulate this communities learning needs and build on this. Examples include: New Primary School, Technology Centre and join any of the connectors.
- **Key questions** signalled the approach to inform, engage and enable community to connect to this, creating the notion of 1,000 conversations across Morwell over 12 months and into the future.
- This approach will continue to inform our ultimate vision for Morwell
- Establish a Common Vision for Morwell as a Learning Hub



# The Journey so far...

- The establishment of Community in a Partnership and network to support a common vision, which encompasses Aboriginal and Non Aboriginal stakeholders with a shared vision for Morwell Morwell4Kids from Birth to Brilliance
- Working with local Aboriginal community to identify a cultural (Standing Strong Plan) plan that is for all Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander young people in Morwell to support their engagement in learning
- Undertaken focus groups with early years' providers and families to understand their needs and support a vision for the future for an Early Years and Community Learning Hub in Morwell
- Creating 1,000 places for conversations – within the neighbourhoods, surveying over 2,500 residents of Morwell on their hopes and dreams across the Morwell community, focussing on vocational learning and pathways
- Our intention is to secure funding for *3840 Our Learning Place* to support the development of a revitalise Learn Local growth across Morwell to develop a learning hub
- Employ a Neighbourhood Learning Links Co-ordinator who will continue the partnership across the community to inform and develop learning platforms for our community members and peak organisations, create Learn Local hub in Morwell going forward, linking to Family Learning and embracing the whole family learning goals