



School Assistance Program & Network Development Evaluation Report

Late in 2013 Southern Peninsula Community Support and Information Centre (SPCSIC) commenced the project “Secondary School Assistance Program & Network Development”. Through this project SPCSIC connected with the three local secondary schools, Dromana College, Rosebud Secondary College and Peninsula Specialist School and gained an understanding of each of their unique models of identifying and assisting vulnerable families. SPCSIC worked with other local allied agencies to develop a network and processes to deliver secondary school assistance ensuring all children in need receive assistance. SPCSIC developed the Secondary School Assistance Program as a networked, holistic approach to better meet the needs of local school children. SPCSIC built connections with the local secondary schools, other Emergency Relief providers, and other allied agencies to develop a network and common processes to deliver Secondary School Assistance. SPCSIC acted as lead agency to deliver the program and targeted a response to the needs of our most vulnerable secondary school children. SPCSIC developed resources and tools to enable better referral processes and greater connection to available resource.

The completed project referral tools were rolled out for use as of July 1 2014.

SPCSIC would like to report on the tangible outcomes of this project and its effect on the 2014-2015 year with regards to local area Secondary Education Assistance provision.

SPCSIC believed that the development of this network may result in an increase of families in need accessing Emergency relief for secondary education costs, as well as higher value assistance required. As a result SPCSIC increased their budget for this period. In fact the outcomes were the reverse and SPCSIC had a reduction in the number of families requiring assistance, and a reduction in the average amount of assistance needed.

Year	Direct assistance	number of direct assists	average assist amount
10-2011	\$5,884.91	42	\$140.12
2011-2012	\$6,375.73	44	\$144.90
2012-2013	\$6,253.48	46	\$135.95
2013-2014	\$5,770.38	41	\$140.74
2014-2015 to 9/6/15	\$3,811.45	34	\$112.10
2014-2015 year compared to 2013-2014 year			
figure reduction	\$1,958.93	7	\$28.64
Percentage reduction	33.95%	17.07%	20.35%

As the provision of education assistance is now shared amongst local agencies and the secondary schools SPCSIC conducted evaluations with local Emergency Relief Providers to assess their experiences. SPCSIC was delighted to see the experience of reduced access and required amounts was shared amongst the local Emergency Relief Providers. All Southern Peninsula Emergency relief providers have seen a reduction in demand, and required value for secondary school assistance. It is a shared belief that this is because other partners, particularly within secondary schools are helping to provide more integrated and holistic solutions.



Number of clients requesting assistance

Increased	remained the same	decreased
0%	0%	100.00%

Amount of assistance requested

Increased	remained the same	decreased
0%	25.00%	75.00%

SPCSIC then undertook to see if this was a unique experience to the Southern Peninsula Area. SPCSIC conducted evaluations with other similar Community Support and Information Centres across the SE region, none of whom have done this work in their areas. A vast majority of agencies outside of the Southern Peninsula have seen the reverse of the Southern Peninsula Experience and have had an increase in both demand and required value for education assistance.

Number of clients requesting assistance

Increased	remained the same	decreased
62.50%	25%	12.50%

Amount of assistance requested

Increased	remained the same	decreased
50%	37.50%	12.50%

SPCSIC is delighted to report such findings, and even more delighted that the collected evidence supports the effectiveness of this project.

Unfortunately this holistic approach is only managed in this way for families with secondary schools students as they represented the families with the highest need cost. The fantastic reduction in secondary school families presenting in need indicates that a similar process across primary schools would be valuable. Unfortunately the salary cost to do this work is currently prohibitive. SPCSIC estimates that this would take \$15,000 to complete this piece of work.

In surveying Local Emergency relief providers 100% believed that duplicate this shared referral process for Primary school education assistance would be very valuable.