

TASKFORCESUBMISSION: submission

NAME: Andrew Parsons

POSITION: Teacher

ORGANISATION:

SUBMISSION1: My submission is prompted by the article in the Age 27 Oct by Prof. Moody. I am a recently retired Physical Education/Health teacher (33 years full time in the classroom) and more recently Outdoor and Environmental education teacher. I obviously feel I have considerable 'hands on' experience in respect of the many issues your taskforce will address in the future.

But actually it is mostly in relation to my wife's role as a primary physical educator that I wish to make comment. She had taught for many years in the classroom until the beginning of 2007 when her school Principal approached her to initiate and pioneer a Physical Education program for the entire school population (... Primary School). As her school would be classified a Category eight (perhaps now changed) and is situated in ... in Melbourne, it definitely caters for '...those with the least education and income'(Age article).

In June 2007 my wife provided a submission/application to a federal government initiative 'Healthy Active Australia. Community and Schools Grant Program'. Her submission was titled 'Pre School Movement and Skills Program'.

As I was someone who had spent all of their working life teaching and motivating young people to adopt a healthy and active lifestyle, both then and into the future, I was very impressed, enthused and positive with the thrust of her submission. It was well scrutinised by others with experience in the art of successful applications.

At the time I could not think of a more meaningful and relevant 'preventative health' focus ie. pre-school and activity based. I still cannot. Brilliant!

Well the rest of the story is depressing, as not only did she not hear a word about her submission in the year 2007 (it was hoped that if granted, the school could set in motion strategies for the start of 2008) she actually received notice of failure of the submission in August 2008!

I was more upset, disillusioned and cynical than my wife. Once a teacher always a teacher they say. Perhaps her excellent submission is still gathering dust in some file waiting to be utilised. I actually hope that someone else took it on board.

So here I am to say that I actually hope that this type of government is maintained going forward. I am also obviously hoping that successful applications in this type of Grants Program are extended so that submissions like the one put forward by my wife, in similar socio/economic areas, are given the highest priority, for reasons you are no doubt well aware.

In conclusion I also believe that people like myself, with considerable experience and latent motivation, should and could be utilised by government initiatives that promote health and fitness

in the community. It could for example be in the form of an 'after-school exercise program' not too dissimilar to commercial after-school and holiday type programs. But this time utilising health professionals who have recently left the full time workforce and to be sponsored by government funding.

Thankyou for the opportunity of this submission and I wish you well in your endeavours. I will now await with interest the outcomes of your challenges in a country that has leaders who always seem to stress how important it is to promote healthy lifestyles.

Go for it!

Yours sincerely

Andrew Parsons

PRIVACY: yes

SUBMIT: Submit