

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP

Deputy Premier

Minister for the Coordination of Education and Training – COVID-19

Minister for Education

Minister for Mental Health



Tuesday, 13 October 2020

YOUTH URGED TO HELP REBUILD BUSHFIRE-HIT COMMUNITIES

Young Victorians affected by bushfires can take part in a series of workshops and consultations as part of a *Bushfire Trauma Recovery & Resilience* program to rebuild their local communities.

Minister for Education James Merlino today invited young people in Outer Gippsland and Ovens Murray areas affected by last summer's bushfires to sign up for online youth advocacy workshops on 15, 20 and 22 October to help lead local bushfire recovery.

The workshops will support young people to lead and engage with recovery in their community and are run in partnership with Youth Affairs Council Victoria (YACVic).

Young people are also invited to take part in a workshop on 6 November to advise on the establishment and operation of a youth-led disaster recovery network.

Young people are urged to bring their fresh ideas and forward-thinking to the interactive workshops to help inform bushfire recovery projects and initiatives over the next two years, including the establishment of a youth-led disaster recovery network. The information will also be published in a final report due for release in 2021.

There will be further consultations in October to December with youth, in partnership with YACVic and Bushfire Recovery Victoria, as part of the Victorian Government's commitment to fund support for communities impacted by the 2019-20 bushfires.

As part of this funding, the Department of Education and Training has established a Trauma Recovery Team to provide expert advice and psychosocial support to schools to support children and young people to recover and rebuild from the impacts of the bushfires.

To register, visit yacvic.org.au/get-involved/events/youth-advocacy-workshops/#TOC-3.

Quote attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino

"Bushfire recovery efforts should be community-led, responsive and flexible and build upon existing community resilience, strengths and knowledge."

Quote attributable to Minister for Police and Emergency Services Lisa Neville

"Engaging young people in recovery activities and decisions will bring fresh ideas and ensure that our actions meet the needs of our young people so that they are supported and able to lead within their communities."

Quote attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Jane Garrett

"East Gippsland was badly affected by bushfire and it's important young people have a role to play in informing how best to rebuild their communities."

Quote attributable to Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes

"Young Victorians will have important insights about recovery to bring to the table – it's vital they have a way to have these ideas and concerns heard."

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