We would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet today and pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging.

What would we use and how would we use it?

Can innovative digital technology be used to both enhance and evaluate wellbeing outcomes with highly vulnerable and disadvantaged young people?

BRISBANE YOUTH SERVICE
NEW FUTURES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

yourtown let's create brighter futures

The *Why*…

The problem

How do we get useful wellbeing progress and outcomes data from young people who are highly transient and crisis driven?

The Idea

Why not get them to engage and record their progress on their phones?

The Opportunity

Optus Future Makers Funding

The First Step

Talking to young people about how what they would use and how they would use it

Research Questions:

- What does wellbeing mean to the young people who come to us for help?

- How do they currently use digital technology in relation to wellbeing?

- How would they use technology to strengthen wellbeing and connection to support?

The *How*…

External Researchers

Dr Karleen Gwinner   **Peter Melrose**   **Dr Amanda Moffat**

With two Youth Consultants

3 Workshops

- Art Marking
- Story telling
- Critical play with apps and websites
- Creating visions and sharing ideas

2 Focus Groups

Testing learning about wellbeing, engagement and digitech

Online Survey

- 372 valid responses
- Social media and KHL links
- Exploring wellbeing, digital technology and engagement with support

The *Who*…

16-25 years old
Grade 10 education, unemployed
Homelessness, AOD use & mental health issues
Anglo-Australian, may be Indigenous or African migrant
Smartphone, uses apps on and offline on data access
Goes online for Information, Social media & Entertainment
Seeks help information online but by phone when in crisis.
High values mutual relationship with support workers
Wellbeing is: being happy, healthy and having material basics
Wellbeing "Makes life worth living"

The *Who*…

Luke is 14 – 17 years old, Anglo-Australian

Uses the internet daily and a range of devices, mostly on a smartphone

Likes apps and sites for gaming and entertainment, some social media but less than Dana

Will seek information from websites but they should be interactive and entertaining

Seeks helpful information online, but mostly with other male friends, which may inhibit deeper interrogation

Takes more risks online in information sharing and disclosure

The *what* we learned…

Wellbeing does not necessarily match our expectations, or fit with our professional agendas

…"We all need our own kind and definitions of wellbeing to survive"…

- Lacks meaning and relevance for those focused on surviving
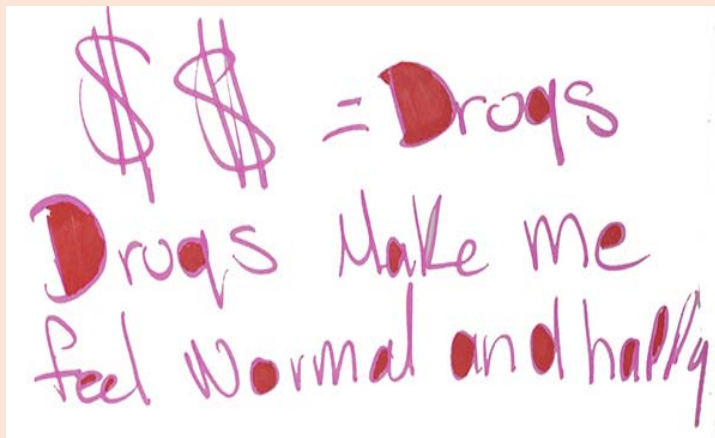- More about coping than thriving

Wellbeing is…

…being Safe, Healthy, Happy and (Rights) Respected

Rights, respect, self-determination and agency are central to wellbeing (85% of young people)

Wellbeing is… being treated with respect

Conflict between Happiness, Health and other dimensions of wellbeing

Wellbeing is...

A natural state

"You don't need things. You are born with some sort of wellbeing it just takes other people to help you grow ur wellbeing."

A right

"...to have a home, bed, family, friends, money, education, food and phone."

Self determined

"...to be positive and take care of my mind."

An attitude

"To have wellbeing I need to make sure I take daily risks and I identify my strengths and disadvantages."
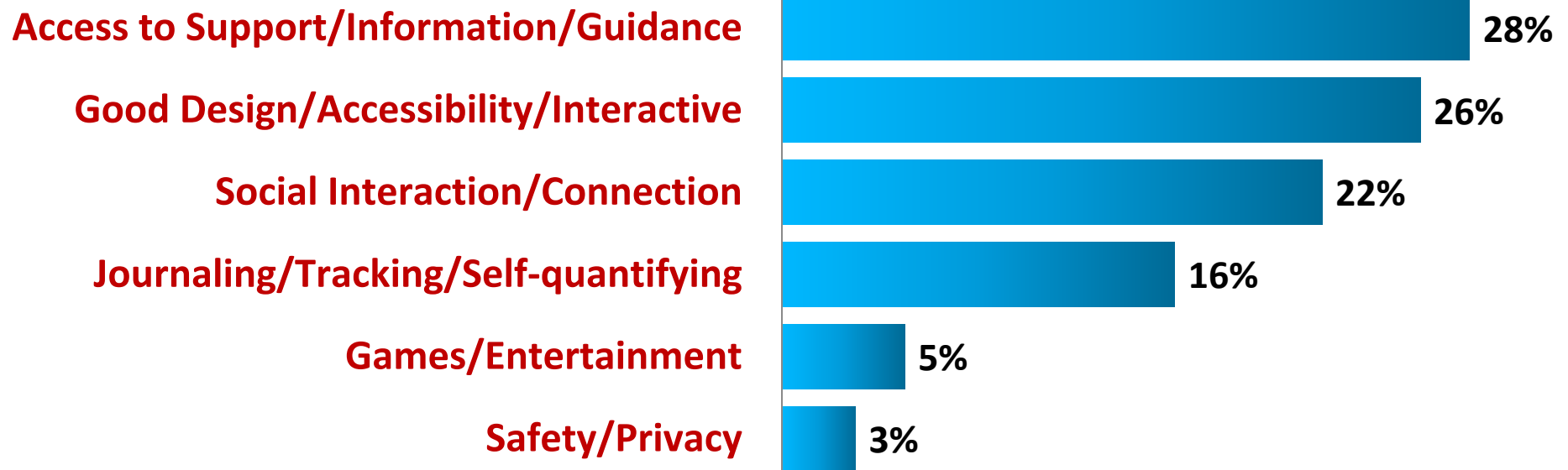
Current Use of Technology…

Daily social engagement

When seeking help 62% use websites 39% use apps

Mental Health

Music Homework Education

Research Life School Work Headspace

Youtube Study

Connection to Support

Opt-in digital connection can enhance but not replace personal contact with a known trusted supporter.
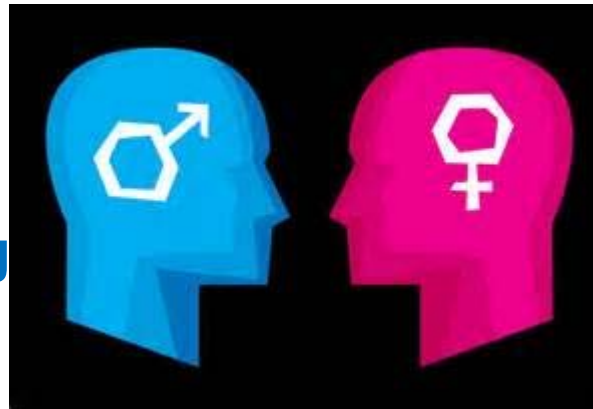
Ring me

Talk through things

"Yeah but you still... they don't know how you have been feeling about it. They don't know how... and then the next worker will be like - oh do you have any coping methods?..."

Gender differences

- **Higher use for gaming and entertainment**
- **Higher online risk taking**
- **Information seeking with mates**
- **Lower engagement in health and wellbeing generally**

- **More independently seeking online help for mental health issues, health and wellbeing.**
- **More social connection and entertainment**
- **More problem-solving and creative**

ENABLERS   AND   BARRIERS

✓ **Quick, fun, personal, social, interactive**

✓ **Direct connection to be heard by someone I trust**

✓ **Non-judgemental**

✓ **Inclusive**

✓ **Transparency**

   "The feeling of being comfortable, like a safe space"

✕ **Long click paths**

✕ **Being lectured at (too much narrative content)**

✕ **Childish design/functionality**

✕ **Not locally/context relevant**

✕ **No accountability/Lack of trust in the people behind it**

✕ **Being monitored (comments moderated and controlled)**
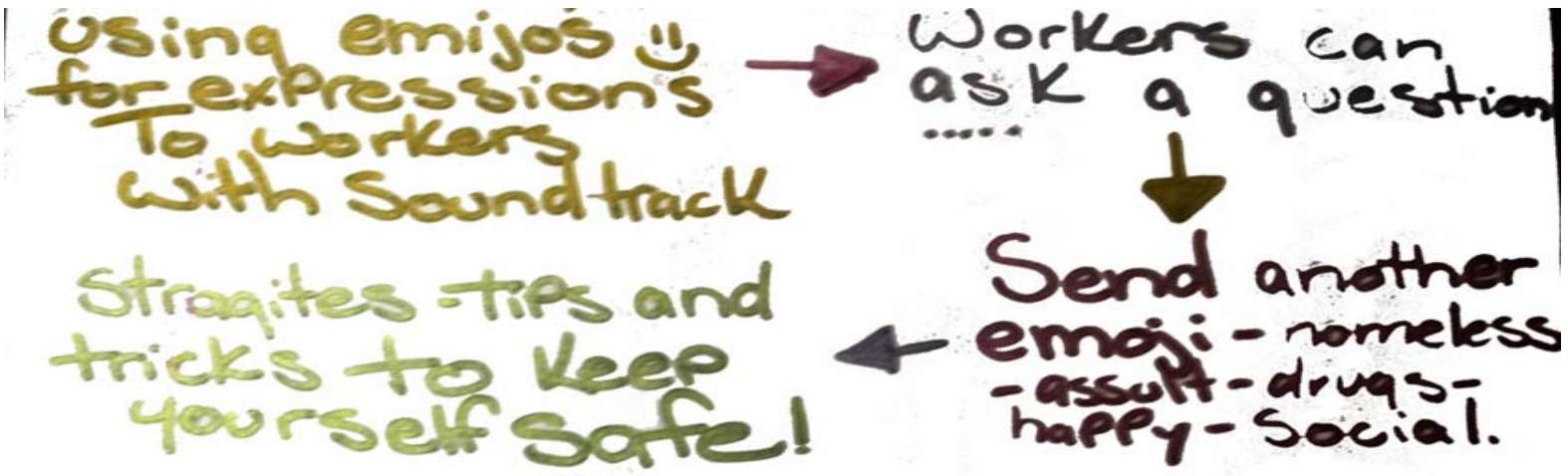
Key learning….

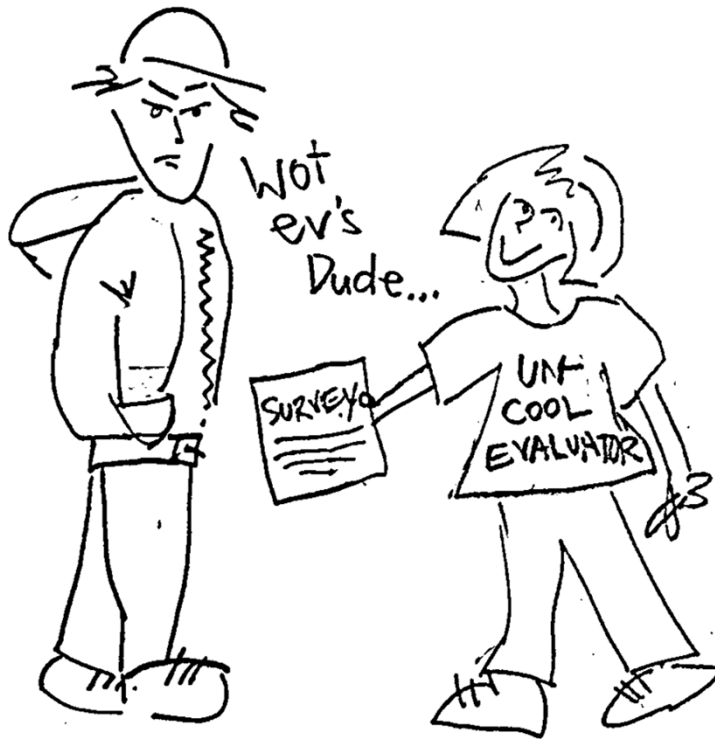**Meet young people in their worlds… with respect**

Young people want to be in control of how they use technology, and when, and what they share.

(but they still want help when they need it)

"...helpful ways to improve my life, for me to be in control..."

Technology should be embedded in a trusted therapeutic relationship

Read more!

http://brisyouth.org/publications/

Contact us!

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