

# Youth Affairs Council Victoria

presents



## CONNECTING THE DOTS

Rural youth sector conference

12 & 13 February 2019

12 Armstrong Street North, Ballarat

Exploring youth health, wellbeing and safety

## CONFERENCE PROGRAM



Youth Affairs  
Council Victoria

Youth Affairs Council Victoria's Connecting the Dots conference will bring the rural youth sector together across two days and one night to explore the latest research, trends and best practice from the field in the areas of *youth health, wellbeing and safety*.

**When: From 1pm Tuesday 12 to 1pm Wednesday 13 February 2019**

**Where: 12 Armstrong Street North, Ballarat**

**Tickets: YACVic members \$60, non-members \$100**

Tickets are inclusive of all sessions on both day one and two, as well as the conference dinner. Tickets are on sale at [www.yacvicrural.org.au](http://www.yacvicrural.org.au)

Designed by rural youth workers for youth sector professionals, the conference offers an opportunity for attendees to strengthen networks, develop new connections, hear from a range of passionate presenters and attend thought-provoking workshops.



30+ scholarship positions are available for rural youth sector professionals.

Limited travel support packages are available to support attendees who are travelling 250kms or more (one way) to attend and can articulate a financial need.

YACVic is a child safe organisation. By attending these events, you agree to join us in our commitment to child safety.

# DAY 1 | Tuesday 12 February 2019

**1pm Registration**

**1.15pm Conference opening & Welcome to Country**

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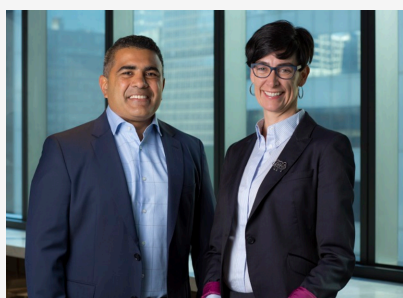
**Paul Turner**

Caretaker CEO, Youth Affairs Council Victoria

Paul has worked in educational leadership roles in schools for most of his career, including 15 years as Principal of a school with a strong youth empowerment philosophy. More recently he has been working in the community service sector, including as Youth Services Strategy Manager for YMCA Victoria. Paul has been a member of the YACVic Board since February 2014 and is currently acting as YACVic CEO.

**1.45pm Guest speakers**

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**Liana Buchanan**

Commissioner for Children and Young People

Liana Buchanan commenced as the Principal Commissioner for Children and Young People in April 2016. Liana has a background in oversight and system reform for people experiencing disadvantage, with a strong focus on family violence and sexual assault.

**Justin Mohamed**

Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People

Justin Mohamed commenced as the new Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People on Monday 28 May. Justin is a proud Aboriginal man of the Gooreng Gooreng nation near Bundaberg in Queensland. He has dedicated the past 25 years to working towards building a stronger and healthier nation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**2.15pm Keynote address**

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**Dr. Ani Wierenga**

University of Melbourne and Centre for Adolescent Health

Dr Ani Wierenga is one of Australia's leading youth researchers. She is a Academic Coordinator, Postgraduate Studies in Adolescent Health and Wellbeing at the Centre for Adolescent Health, Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne and a Honorary Senior Fellow with the School of Social and Political Sciences at University of Melbourne. As a rural youth worker and then sociologist, Ani has worked with young people for 25+ years. Her primary focus is on research and teaching which supports effective policy and practice with young people, in their wellbeing, learning and active social participation.

**3pm** Afternoon tea

**3.30pm Small group workshops**

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Workshops focusing on youth mental health, child safety, cultural safety and best practice in working with young people, presented by:



Youth Affairs  
Council Victoria

**5pm** Break

**6.30pm Sector consultation and networking session**

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**7.30pm Conference dinner**

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**9pm** Close of Day 1





# DAY 2 | Wednesday 13 February 2019

## 9am Day 2 Opening address & guest speaker

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### **Kerrie Loveless**

Board Chair, Youth Affairs Council Victoria

With close to twenty years' experience in the youth and community sector, Kerrie has worked and volunteered within a range of community organisations, as well as state and local government. These roles have been located in both inner city and urban fringe communities and have included running group programs, providing individual support, developing policy and managing services.



### **Gabrielle Williams MP**

State Member for Dandenong and the Minister for Women, Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, Minister for Youth.

Ms Williams MP has extensive experience working in both State and Federal government, as well as in the community sector. Ms Williams MP is a qualified lawyer, having studied at Monash University and is a passionate advocate for multiculturalism and social inclusion.

## 9.30am Guest speaker

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### **Deb Tsorbaris**

CEO, Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

Deb has worked in health and community services for over 30 years. Deb has provided policy advice to government on a range of issues and has worked across disability, drugs and alcohol, youth services and employment programs. Deb is a keen advocate for improving the lives of children, young people and families in the areas of child safety, education and health.

## 10am Guest speaker

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### **Dr. Catherine Orr**

Medical Director, Gateway Health Wodonga

Dr. Catherine Orr is one of the leading innovators in the provision of sexual and reproductive health services including medical termination of pregnancy in a rural medical setting. She has overseen the development of the Multicultural Clinic which sees all the newly arrived refugees to the region and the development of the first locally based HIV clinic. She is also the doctor for Clinic 35 Gateway Health which is a sexual health clinic for young people and oversaw the development of the Medical Termination of Pregnancy program.

**10.30am** Morning tea

**11am Small group workshops**

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Workshops focusing on tackling domestic violence, sexual health promotion and resourcing the youth sector to support our most vulnerable young people, presented by:



**12.45pm Conference wrap up**

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**1pm Conference closed**

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# Post-Conference Event



## Free Post Conference Sexual Health Workshop

**FREE CONFERENCE REGISTRATION** will be given to those who commit to attending the below post conference workshop. Register via the Connecting the Dots [conference webpage](#) and select the ticket option 'Full Scholarship Registration' to claim your free registration.

## Session Overview

**Adolescence and the sticky bits:** be informed about the latest in sexual and reproductive health, and make talking about sex and relationships part of your everyday conversations. The session will explore:

- the key sexuality and sexual health issues experienced by young people,
- factors that can influence good sexual health,
- what is good professional practice when it comes to talking about intimate issues with young people,
- What role you can play to support good sexual health

*Facilitated by a range of rural practitioners and sexual health workers: Dr Catherine Orr, Ange Davidson and Sam Perna (Gateway Health); Martin Gladman (Thorne Harbour Country); Suzanne Wallis (Goulburn Valley Health); Dr Bianca Forrester (Barwon Health); Jenny Walsh (Education consultant); Kylie Stephens (CERSH).*