



Act-Belong-Commit

Muswellbrook Shire Community Forum

Muswellbrook Healthy & Well – University of Newcastle

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Muswellbrook Healthy & Well is proudly supported by Bengalla Mining Company

Disclaimer

This report reflects the discussions that occurred on Wednesday 26th September 2018 during the Community Forum to launch Muswellbrook Healthy and Well. It is intended to guide implementation and delivery of the Act-Belong-Commit campaign in the Muswellbrook Shire community, with the advice and assistance of a Local Steering Committee. We would like to acknowledge the existing efforts and contributions of many organisations, groups and individuals towards a healthier Muswellbrook community, and we look forward to working together.



Photo: Carly Hughes (Local Coordinator, Muswellbrook Healthy & Well) and Cam Halfpenny (CEO, Bengalla Mining Company) at the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign Launch and Community Forum.

Introduction

The *Muswellbrook Act-Belong-Commit Launch and Community Forum* was held on Wednesday 26th September 2018 from 5:30-7:30pm at the Muswellbrook Police Citizens Youth Club (PCYC). There was a total of 38 attendees at the event. The primary aim of the forum was to bring the community together to brainstorm opportunities for Act-Belong-Commit (A-B-C) in the Muswellbrook Shire and to guide the development of a community action plan. A secondary aim was to provide an opportunity for like-minded, community-oriented people to network and be inspired.

The community forum was facilitated by the *Muswellbrook Healthy & Well* Local Coordinator, Carly Hughes. The forum included the official launch of the Act-Belong-Commit campaign in the Muswellbrook Shire, conducted by Professor Alan Hayes from The University of Newcastle, Family Action Centre. This was followed by the viewing of the *Muswellbrook Healthy & Well* video, incorporating community members' views on 'what being healthy and well' means to them. Following the video an introduction and background to the Act-Belong-Commit campaign was provided.



In the second part of the forum, two small-group discussion questions were posed to attendees. This involved 10-minutes of interactive brainstorming across the four group tables, with each group then providing feedback to the rest of the attendees.

The two questions posed were:

1. In what ways is Muswellbrook already demonstrating the Act-Belong-Commit message?
2. How can we encourage uptake of the Act-Belong-Commit campaign in Muswellbrook?

A final question was then discussed with the whole group:

3. Who are some key individuals or organisations that we could encourage to get involved?

In the final part of the forum, the facilitator discussed the benefits of partnering with the Act-Belong-Commit campaign, and provided information on how groups can enter into a formal or informal partnership. The evening concluded with the opportunity to make an Act-Belong-Commit pledge. This involved attendees identifying a goal they would like to work towards based on the Act-Belong-Commit message, examples of pledges made include becoming a volunteer and participating in a half marathon.

Question 1

In what ways is Muswellbrook already demonstrating the Act-Belong-Commit message?

Question one was designed to stimulate discussion around what groups and activities are already active in the Muswellbrook Shire community, which promote the key principles of the Act-Belong-Commit message.

Responses included a mixture of events, groups, clubs, associations and community services and organisations available in the Muswellbrook Shire.

1. Events identified included; Christmas Spectacular; Cultural Spectacular; Steptember; Men's Shed, Community Open Day; Hunter Park, community BBQ's; Blue Heelers Film Festival, Harmony Day, Mining Companies, RUOK Day activities.
2. Clubs identified included; Police Citizens Youth Club (PCYC), Rotary and Book club
3. Groups identified included; volunteer, Red Door; church; multicultural; social media; social; hobby; writers; youth; Scouts and playgroups
4. Associations identified included; Country Women's Association; Men's Shed; Sporting (Football, Netball, Soccer);
5. Community services identified included; Disability services; Police Force; Upper Hunter Community Services, Hunter Park Family Centre; Schools; Local Medical Services, General Practitioners; Rural Fire Service; Mental Health First Aid; Library
6. Community organisations identified included; Where There's a Will; University of Newcastle, Family Action Centre; Lions; Girl Guides; Landcare; Art Gallery; Upper Hunter Conservatorium of Music;

Question 2

How can we encourage uptake of the Act-Belong-Commit campaign in Muswellbrook?

The aim of question two was to gather locally-identified strategies that could be useful for implementing the Act-belong-Commit campaign in the Muswellbrook Shire.

The proposed actions suggested by attendees during the brainstorming session incorporated a range of ideas. These included:

- Promoting Act-Belong-Commit through already established avenues in the community for example, community events and activities; media outlets (local paper, radio, community noticeboards, social media); Muswellbrook Council facilities and communication networks; schools and workplaces
- Developing a community directory to inform people of activities available in Muswellbrook under the Act-Belong-Commit message
- Planning events related to Act-Belong-Commit for example, “How to Volunteer” and “Come and Try” days

These suggestions will be used to develop a set of concrete recommendations for the Act-Belong-Commit local coordinator and steering committee to further explore and action.

Question 3

Who are some key individuals or organisations that we could encourage to get on board?

Question three was discussed as a wider group. A number of people nominated themselves as being interested in getting involved with the campaign. Other individuals and groups included:

- Muswellbrook Shire Council Mayor
- Chamber of Commerce
- Schools
- Upper Hunter Community Services
- Community groups and clubs e.g. PCYC

It was also acknowledged that responses identified in Questions 1 and 2 would provide further direction around key individuals and organisations who may be interested in partnering with Act-Belong-Commit.

Draft Community Action Plan

Based on responses from the Community Forum, the following action plan has been drafted.

Objective	Strategy	Activities
Implement Act-Belong-Commit campaign in Muswellbrook Shire	Build awareness of the Act-Belong-Commit campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify community ambassadors to role model the Act-Belong-Commit message ▪ Develop a social media plan and connect with other community pages ▪ Build relationships with local media (e.g. radio and newspaper) ▪ Provide accessible information in prominent community locations (e.g. library, rates notice, real estate booklets for new residents) ▪ Develop and promote the online Act-Belong-Commit self-assessment form ▪ Provide an information stall at community events and activities ▪ Design a variety of Act-Belong-Commit merchandise and resources (e.g. t-shirts, shopping bags, bumper stickers, calendar) for distribution through local events ▪ Deliver Act-Belong-Commit presentations to community groups, services and workplaces
	Link existing local activities and events to the Act-Belong-Commit initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop an activity finder to promote local activities available in Muswellbrook and connect to the Act-Belong-Commit message ▪ Promote personal stories related to the Act-Belong-Commit message to promote the initiative's positive impact on people in the community, and in organisations, services, groups, clubs and so on. ▪ Promote Act-Belong-Commit friendly spaces where people feel welcome to encourage community and 'belonging' ▪ Collaborate with partners to brand events and activities using positive messaging around wellbeing and belonging
	Engage with organisations linked to the Act-Belong-Commit initiative by planning and supporting events and activities	<p>Steering committee to discuss ideas for new events or initiatives, and scope out feasibility through discussion with local organisations and community members.</p> <p>Examples of ideas raised at the forum include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ "Come and Try" days (e.g. <i>what's on in the Brook?</i>) ▪ Community challenges (e.g. <i>Town vs. Town</i>) ▪ "Bring a Buddy Day" at community events/activities ▪ "How to Volunteer" day
	Develop local partnerships with the Act-Belong-Commit campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invite community groups, clubs, associations and organisations etc. to partner with the Act-Belong-Commit campaign ▪ Support community partnerships with Memorandum of Understanding ▪ Promote Act-Belong-Commit partnerships, using the Muswellbrook Healthy & Well website and Facebook page

Next steps

If you would like to provide additional feedback and comments regarding the draft action plan for the Muswellbrook Act-Belong-Commit campaign, please contact Carly Hughes, Local Coordinator for *Muswellbrook Healthy and Well*. The closing date for additional feedback and comments will be **Friday 26th October 2018**.

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If you would like to **nominate yourself** or **someone you work with** for the **Muswellbrook Act-Belong-Commit steering committee**, please also contact Carly Hughes.

The steering committee will be responsible for endorsing the draft action plan, incorporating comments and feedback provided by the community. Once the action plan has been finalised, the steering committee will distribute the roles and responsibilities needed to meet the action plan objectives.

Appendix 1: Responses to Question 1

In what ways is Muswellbrook already demonstrating the Act-Belong-Commit message?

Responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Volunteer groups ▪ Church groups ▪ Men's Shed (Community open day) ▪ Local paper ▪ Red Door ▪ Landcare ▪ Senior citizens ▪ Disability services ▪ Sports Associations (football, netball, soccer) ▪ PCYC ▪ Local medical centres (General Practitioners) ▪ Paper shop ▪ Rural Fire Service ▪ multicultural groups ▪ Organised events (Christmas event at race course, Markets, Lions/Rotary/Apex groups, cultural spectacular, <i>Steptember</i>) ▪ Town Library (brain training, social groups, ukuleles) ▪ Numerous social media groups ▪ Carers' Support ▪ Hunter Park Family Centre ▪ Community BBQs at Hunter Park ▪ Where There's a Will ▪ Schools – Positive Education, bullying campaign, teacher training ▪ TAFE ▪ Art Gallery ▪ Police force ▪ Hobby groups ▪ Country Women's Association ▪ Family Action Centre (University of Newcastle) ▪ Lions/Lioness ▪ Writers' group ▪ Playgroups ▪ Book club ▪ Rotary ▪ Youth groups ▪ Guides, Brownies, Scouts ▪ Yoga and meditation ▪ Mental Health First Aid ▪ Blue Heelers Film Festival ▪ The Cottage ▪ Riding for the Disabled ▪ Apex ▪ <i>RUOK</i> activities, specifically in Muswellbrook's mining industry ▪ Endeavour ▪ Upper Hunter Conservatorium of Music ▪ Hospital Auxiliary Ladies ▪ Upper Hunter Community Services ▪ National Disability Insurance Scheme ▪ Harmony Day ▪ Committee roles

- Community fundraisers
- *Have a Go in the Brook* – volunteer sign-up
- Photography competition
- Volunteering at sporting clubs to ensure sports remain operational
- Mining companies
- Interest groups
- Furniture (PCYC, men's shed) – support for young people and homeless

Note: These responses are not intended to be a comprehensive or complete list of the groups and activities currently active in the Muswellbrook Shire. This list represents those activities and events that were raised by attendees during the 10-minute discussion.

Appendix 2: Responses to Question 2

How can we encourage uptake of the Act-Belong-Commit campaign in Muswellbrook?

Responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use social media groups to outreach to people who might not be actively involved ▪ Promote on rates notice ▪ One-on-one conversations ▪ Visits to schools and other groups (UHCS, RSL's and other clubs) ▪ Reach people slowly ▪ A day to invite people to a social event ▪ Facebook share and like ▪ Piggy back onto other activities/events ▪ Networking with other organisations ▪ School activities and distribute info on A-B-C ▪ Actions "small act, big change" – start small ▪ Media outlets – promote, publicise and inform ▪ Community directory to inform – a lot happening (but people don't always know!) ▪ Library package for people new to Muswellbrook ▪ Real estate booklets/new resident packs ▪ "Come and try" days at local clubs or activities – incorporate food to make people feel welcome ▪ Working with local clubs to rebrand for mental wellbeing and belonging, e.g., Rotary, Country Women's Association ▪ Link to existing events and prominent community members to lead by example – A-B-C ▪ Community challenges and town vs. town challenges – advertise in local paper and inter-school education and challenges ▪ Find creative ways to promote the message, for example creating a Calendar that people can hang up in their home and use daily ▪ Word of mouth ▪ Encouraging connections/new friendships ▪ "Bring a buddy day" for community groups ▪ Doing activities (e.g. sport) in neutral spaces, inviting public spaces ▪ "How to Volunteer" day – a day run by local charities or not-for-profits for interested people to learn how to volunteer, with the aim of reducing or removing barriers to getting involved ▪ Information forums – help raise awareness around where service gaps are ▪ Media – radio, newspapers, community noticeboard (Facebook and market place), social media ▪ Make information accessible within service locations, e.g. GP's offices, Visitor Information Centre, Council facilities ▪ Workplaces ▪ Promote the Active Kids/Creative Kids vouchers in the community and encourage businesses to support these ▪ Place flyers in the school/workplace ▪ Encourage people to try lots of different things to find what they like ▪ Try things with someone ▪ Use the online self-assessment survey ▪ Link to services that are available – interested in this area? (information on how to engage) ▪ Farmers – livestock shop ▪ Promote things that are happening in Muswellbrook ▪ GP's, counsellor, Pharmacies, Lawyers ▪ Stalls in the community ▪ Attend community activities ▪ Meet-up group ▪ Act-Belong-Commit town – help people feel welcome when trying something new ▪ Use personal stories on how a group/organisation has impacted their lives ▪ Merchandise (t-shirts/shopping bags, bumper stickers)

Appendix 3: Question 3

Who are some key individuals or organisations that we could encourage to get on board?

Responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Mayor▪ Multicultural ladies' group▪ Men's shed▪ Local member/federal member▪ Chamber of Commerce▪ Lions▪ Schools/principals▪ PCYC▪ Landcare▪ UHCS▪ Sporting clubs▪ SES/RFS▪ Headspace