



Australian Institute for  
**Disaster Resilience**

# 3<sup>rd</sup> National DRANZSEN Forum 2018

Key notes and outcomes

[aidr.org.au](http://aidr.org.au) | [knowledge.aidr.org.au](http://knowledge.aidr.org.au) | [schools.aidr.org.au](http://schools.aidr.org.au)



@AIDRnews



@AIDR\_News

## Education for Young People Program

The AIDR Education for Young People supports the implementation of effective and sustainable disaster resilience education initiatives which empower and give a voice to young people throughout Australia.

The Disaster Resilience Australian-New Zealand School Education Network (DRANZSEN) seeks to:

- Communicate a shared understanding of Disaster Resilience Education (DRE) connected to international frameworks and relevant to an Australian context
- Build the capacity of teachers and other educators to deliver effective and sustainable DRE to young people, informed by contemporary research and aligned with the Australian Curriculum
- Provide a forum for schools, emergency management agencies and community organisations in the network to share knowledge, good practice and strategic objectives related to DRE
- Facilitate networking and collaboration between stakeholders in the design and delivery of new DRE initiatives.

## Forum program

Forum Chair: Amanda Leck, Director Community Safety and Resilience, Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience

10:15am	Registration (including morning tea)
10:45am	Welcome, acknowledgement of country, and opening remarks <i>Luke Brown, Emergency Management Australia, Department of Home Affairs</i>
11:05am	Supporting Young People & Schools in Recovering Communities <i>Lisa Gibbs, University of Melbourne</i>
11:35am	Nearer to Nature: Ecological Learning for Disaster Resilience <i>John Anderson, WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions</i>
12:00pm	Lunch and AFAC18 Poster Session
12:55pm	Connecting & Coping in a Crisis: Protective Actions for Young Australians <i>Claire Silveira, Australian Red Cross</i>
1:20pm	Bushfire Education in Strathewen <i>Jane Hayward, Strathewen Primary School</i>
1:45pm	AIDR Education for Young People Program <i>Brigid Little, Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience</i>
1:50pm	Disaster Resilience Education Visionary Document <i>Consultation exercise led by Susan Davie, Victoria State Emergency Service</i>
2:35pm	Break
3:00pm	School Education Strategy Presentations & Panel Session (facilitated by Amanda Leck) <i>Peta O'Donohue (SA CFS), Linley Brown (DFES WA) and Andrew Clarke (TFS)</i>
4:15pm	Closing remarks, evaluation and feedback

## Organisations represented

WA Department of Fire & Emergency Services (3)	WA Department of Education (4)
NSW Rural Fire Service (1)	Department of Education, Victoria (1)
NT Fire, Rescue & Emergency Services (1)	Catholic Education Melbourne (1)
Queensland Fire & Emergency Services (1)	WA Dept of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions (2)
SA Country Fire Service (2)	Forest Fire Management Victoria - DELWP (3)
Victoria State Emergency Service (1)	Butler College (1)
SA State Emergency Service (1)	Adventist Development & Relief Agency Australia (1)
Queensland State Emergency Service (1)	Curtin University (1)
Tasmania State Emergency Service (1)	RMIT University (1)
Department of Home Affairs (2)	University of Melbourne (1)
Blue Mountains City Council (1)	Central Queensland University (1)
Melton City Council (1)	Australian Red Cross (2)
Eco Logical Australia (1)	Education Safety Network (1)
Bureau of Land Management, Alaska (1)	Goldfields Paramedic (1)
AIDR (2)	United Fire Brigades Association (1)
Total: 42	

## Attendance profile

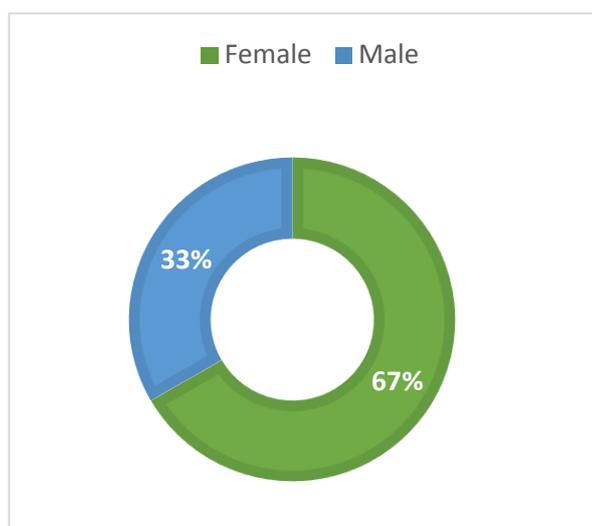


Figure 1: Audience profile by gender

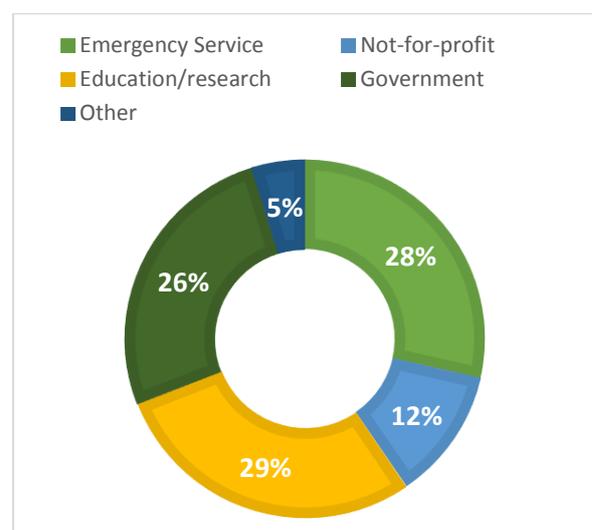


Figure 2: Audience profile by sector representation

## Opening Remarks (Luke Brown, Department of Home Affairs)

After an introduction and welcome from Amanda Leck (AIDR), Luke Brown - Assistant Secretary of the Disaster Resilience Strategy Branch, Emergency Management Australia, Department of Home Affairs - performed an Acknowledgement of Country (acknowledging the Whadjuk and Noongar peoples) and addressed participants. Luke referred to:

- the key role and expertise of DRANZSEN (Disaster Resilient Australia New Zealand Schools Education Network) members in promoting and supporting disaster resilience education to reduce disaster risk and impacts for children and young people in Australia
- active DRANZSEN groups in every state and territory (with a total of over 400 members)
- government support for DRANZSEN stakeholders in education, research, fire and emergency services working with young people to build disaster resilient communities
- the strength of the network in developing a common language and approach to disaster resilience education linked to the Sendai Framework and Comprehensive School Safety Framework
- shared focus on protection of children in safe learning environments as well as education to develop understanding of local hazards and risk, and enable protective action for disaster risk reduction and community resilience
- the Disaster Resilience Education Strategy Group (DRESG) driving a strategic vision for disaster resilience education
- membership of DRESG: representatives from the Department of Home Affairs, AFAC/AIDR, the Australian Red Cross, Australian Catholic University, Central Queensland University, RMIT, the Victorian Department of Education and Training, the Geography Teachers Association of Victoria and Victorian State Emergency Service.

## Supporting Young People & Schools in Recovering Communities (Professor Lisa Gibbs, University of Melbourne)

Professor Gibbs, from the Jack Brockhoff Child Health & Wellbeing Program at the University of Melbourne, presented information from the *Beyond Bushfires* research project and associated studies, *Strengthening School Communities*, *ELVA evaluation*, and *Survive & Thrive evaluation* (research conducted alongside many colleagues and partner organisations).

Notes:

- Background: February 2009 Black Saturday Bushfires; 35 children and young people lost their lives, 16 were orphaned and 78 primary schools were located within high impact areas.
- School level impacts: staff/student shared trauma, behavioural changes with concentration difficulties and developmental delays, school social and learning environments changed for years after the event.
- Resilience process: dynamic interaction between individual traits, individual skills, support & resources available, past experience, current demands
- Examples of successful recovery interventions:
  - ELVA (emotional learning through visual arts): calming for students, helped teachers with emotional literacy
  - Victorian Country Fire Authority's (CFA) Survive and Thrive Program: children recognised the need for different safety behaviours in different contexts, recognition that children now share knowledge about bushfire safety, children understood emotional impact of a danger situation and their capacity to manage their emotions, children's reports of their actual responses to the threat of a real bushfire demonstrated they used their new knowledge and skills

Recommendations from Professor Gibbs presentation on approaches to disaster resilience education include:

- Restore a sense of safety and stability
- School-based programs for social and emotional learning
- Additional academic support may be needed
- Learning to live in a risk environment
- Provide opportunities for students to contribute
- Build the evidence base for resilience programs

Contact: [lgibbs@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:lgibbs@unimelb.edu.au)

## **Nearer to Nature: Ecological Learning for Disaster Resilience (John Anderson, WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions)**

John Anderson, Project Officer for WA Parks and Wildlife's *Nearer to Nature* schools program in the South West Region, demonstrated how learning about the local ecology is key to authentic disaster resilience education.

Notes:

- Highlighted curriculum links:
  - Living with fire (Year 5): The impact of bushfires or floods on environments and communities, and how people can respond (ACHASSK114)
  - Bushfire hazard (Year 7-10)
  - Fire Biology - A force of life: Year 11 Biology / Year 12 Earth & Environmental Science
  - Fire Geography - A natural hazard: Year 11/12 Geography
- Outcomes:
  - Understanding that fire is natural, inevitable and essential (ecological imperative for fire provides a framework to understand why fire events happen)
  - Understanding factors affecting fire behaviour
  - Individual awareness and responsibility = empowerment
  - Being prepared as individuals and communities to minimise adverse consequences
  - Long term community support for prescribed burning - fire deliberately lit under controlled circumstances considering a range of values:
    - Community protection (settlements, hospitals, schools, essential utilities)
    - Visitor values (camping areas, recreation sites, cultural/heritage)
    - Biodiversity conservation (fire vulnerable threatened species and ecological communities, monitoring plots, encouraging regrowth)
    - Forest production (pine plantations, young regrowth)
- Program elements
  - Pre- and post-excursion classroom activities
  - Causes and history of bushfire in SW WA
  - The fire triangle / types of fire
  - Indigenous use of fire / the fire mosaic
  - Fieldwork & hands on activities
  - Use of authentic online resources and tools to map historic fire events, analyse data and visualise fire behaviour and impacts.

Contact: [john.anderson@dbca.wa.gov.au](mailto:john.anderson@dbca.wa.gov.au)



## Connecting & Coping in a Crisis: Protective Actions for Young Australians (Claire Silveira, Australian Red Cross)

Claire is the Emergency Services Coordinator for Preparedness and Recovery in Western Australia. She is an experienced preparedness educator, managing and delivering the primary school Pillowcase Project and high school WA Youth Project to schools in WA as well as adult Red Cross RediPlan sessions. Claire is experienced in Recovery having worked events such as the Parkerville, Stoneville Mt Helena fire in the Perth hills, the Harvey, Waroona and Yarloop fire, Esperance fire and more recently the Osmington (Margaret River) shooting tragedy.

Notes:



- There is significant disruption to lives due to psychosocial impact of disasters.
- Psychosocial: thoughts/feelings, relationships/community
- In recovery, these points stand out:
  - Lack of prior awareness/understanding
  - School communities feeling overwhelmed
  - An uptake of disaster resilience education post disaster
  - Absence of a coordination mechanism across the sector to ensure schools are not overwhelmed by offers of support
- What can we take from this to inform our work in DRE? Individuals and communities need:
  - greater awareness and understanding of psychosocial impacts of disasters & traumatic events.
  - the skills and capabilities to prevent, prepare for, cope with and recover from these impacts.
- How can we apply these learnings?
  - Engage in activities that explore psychosocial impacts and promote mental health & wellbeing.
  - Promote and model positive coping strategies
  - Provide opportunities for children and young people to connect with each other and communities
  - Create safe relaxation spaces and opportunities for young people
  - participate in personal and community recovery in the aftermath of a disaster or traumatic event.
- Connection to Curriculum
  - Recognising emotions and promoting positive coping strategies
  - Investigate how emotional responses vary in depth and strength
  - Examining the influence of emotional responses on behaviour
- Let's connect & collaborate. We can:
  - Provide guidance & resources and run training
  - Facilitate disaster recovery support groups
  - Cross promote programs
  - Engage in research

## Bushfire Education at Strathewen (Jane Hayward, Strathewen Primary School)

Jane has been the teaching Principal at a small, rural school in Strathewen since 2007. The school community suffered devastating losses in the Black Saturday bushfires of 2009. Jane presented on the Strathewen Arthurs Creek Bushfire Education Partnership, now in its third year.

### Background:

The Strathewen Arthurs Creek Bushfire Education Partnership is a joint effort between the school and local Country Fire Authority volunteers. 2009 Black Saturday impacts: loss of school, homes, pets, farms, businesses, local infrastructure and the loss of friends and family. Post trauma issues included children demonstrating heightened anxiety and many psychological issues. Teaching distressed kids and working with traumatised families imposed a huge welfare burden on school staff. The fire season brought issues each year.

### The Strathewen Arthurs Creek Bushfire Education Partnership:

Strathewen Primary has a current enrolment of 40: two teachers and a little part time team. Many current students were raised in distressed homes, with adults just keeping it together. The school was looking for a bushfire education program sensitive to the needs of the local community; not revisiting trauma, looking forward not back. The Survive and Thrive pilot program at Anglesea Primary school was up and running and local CFA volunteer, Lisal O'Brien, connected with Jamie McKenzie (CFA Anglesea). Then Jane and Lisal began to devise their own program for Strathewen.

### The Program:

- The school secured funding and commenced working with grade 5-6 students in 2016. Nothing but interest, encouragement, sharing of expertise and support from school and wider community.
- Program runs over Terms 2 & 3. Kids all become Junior CFA members and wear their uniform each Tuesday.
- Student driven: the kids drive the direction of their project each year.
- Focus: educating kids about bushfire risk and 'learning to love where we live again':
  - the science of fire behaviour, skill building.
  - the Fire Danger Rating system and what we need to do to live safely
  - the need to leave the area on days of extreme risk
- First year: Claymation production - being bushfire aware and understanding the Fire Danger Rating system
- Second year: picture story book about residents being prepared for the fire season
- This year: a second animation - the history of fire; investigating the patterns of bushfires over the last century or so, looking at our local valley pre-white settlement through to today

### Outcomes and impacts:

- Deep connections between students and local community, including great relationships with local CFA volunteers, local seniors, outside experts, emergency services etc
- Curriculum-linked learning in geography, science, maths, digital technology, outdoor education, design and technology, literacy, leadership, personal skills etc
- Student engagement: student attitudes to school survey looked like fake news it was so high
- Community interest - they follow school Facebook page and take great interest in our updates
- The spread of knowledge and information from school to home, via students - upskilling parents
- School pride and confidence among students representing their school and community, sharing knowledge
- Sense of safety / reduced anxiety

Jane concluded her presentation with a moving letter from a parent on the positive impact of the Bushfire Education program on a Strathewen primary student and how it contributed to her recovery from the 2009 fires.

## AIDR Education for Young People Program (Brigid Little, Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience)

Brigid Little, Senior Project Officer for the Education for Young People Program, presented an overview of the program, guiding principles, resources and opportunities for future development.

AIDR Education for Young People Program guided by:

- [National Strategy for Disaster Resilience](#)
- [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction](#)
- Comprehensive School Safety Framework (UNISDR)
- Understanding of risk as a relationship between a hazard, exposure and vulnerability
- Understanding of risk reduction in relation to disaster prevention, preparedness, response and recovery
- [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (see Goal 11 Sustainable Cities & Communities and Goal 13 Climate Action)
- [DRANZSEN](#) (Disaster Resilient Australia New Zealand Schools Education Network) and [DRESG](#) (Disaster Resilience Education Strategy Group)
- Model of learning:
  - content knowledge and skills (curriculum-linked with a focus on local context)
  - partnerships for learning: teachers, students, experts (including emergency services), community groups etc
  - student-led action to reduce risk and build community resilience

Resources & Communications:

- [website](#) (curriculum map, teaching resources, links to state and territory organisations, illustrations of practice etc)
- [Pinterest](#) collection
- [disaster map](#) on the AIDR Knowledge Hub
- [newsletter](#)

Contact: [brigid.little@aidr.org.au](mailto:brigid.little@aidr.org.au) Tel: 03 9418 5242

## Disaster Resilience Education Visionary Document (consultation exercise led by Susan Davie, Victoria State Emergency Service)

Susan Davie, Victoria State Emergency Service, presented a draft of the Disaster Resilience Education visionary document, on behalf of the Disaster Resilience Education Strategy Group (DRESG) for consultation with the event participants.

Overview of document (as presented at national DRANZSEN forum):

- Introduction: increasing disaster risk and role of disaster resilience education in contemporary context
- Vision: young Australians as active members in skilled and resilient communities
- Guiding Frameworks: national strategy, Sendai framework, Comprehensive School Safety framework
- Research overview (informed by Bushfire & Natural Hazards CRC 'child-centred disaster risk reduction' study)
- Role of DRANZSEN
- Resilient Australia Awards: illustrations of practice
- Curriculum Links & national reports on education (Gonski 2.0 & STEM industry-school partnerships)
- Sustainable Development Goals
- Recommendations



During the consultation exercise, forum participants proposed a range of additions and amendments to the document. For example:

- Focus on skills rather than 'key messages'
- Focus on existing problem ('gaps') and propose solution
- Clarify wording, scope and review use of acronyms
- Make more concise and use plain English
- Clarify the role of emergency services and others
- Refer to child-safe principles, health and wellbeing and relevant safety legislation
- Highlight student voice and right to participation
- Consider requirement for teacher professional development

[This document has been updated and approved by the AIDR governance committee and will be made available on our website.]

## **School Education Strategy Presentations & Panel Session (facilitated by Amanda Leck, Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience)**

Representatives from DRANZSEN member organisations in each state and territory were offered the opportunity to present strategic updates. Updates were provided as follows:

Peta O'Donohue, South Australian Country Fire Service (CFS)

- How can SA CFS best support disaster resilience education with limited resource?
- Overview of activities: SA DRANZSEN, education resources, community events etc
- Sampson Flat fire research: 75% of respondents felt physically prepared, 56% felt mentally prepared
- DRE as two-way engagement between emergency services and community: connection, collaboration and learning, leading to shared action.

Linley Brown, Western Australia Department of Fire & Emergency Services (DFES)

Linley spoke to participants about her experiences with DFES, engaging teachers in professional development for disaster resilience education. Linley outlined challenges such as teachers in remote locations, lack of teacher awareness and competing school priorities. She was able to overcome some of these barriers, by travelling to different locations and collaborating with other PD providers, such as TeachMeetWA.

Andrew Clarke, Tasmania Fire Service (TFS)

Andrew presented an overview of the TFS' School Fire Education Program (SFEP) for home fire safety and his own research evaluating this program.

- SFEP program in place for 20 years. 95% of primary school children. 2-3 visits. Delivered by career firefighters.
- Structural fires pose greater risk to Australian children than bushfire. Evaluation of learning needs to be more active than a written test.
- Collaborative evaluation of program with teachers, researchers, children and parents
- Making use of virtual reality (VR) resources for learning and assessment, to enable student to demonstrate problem solving and safety skills in simulated house fire scenarios.

Following the presentations, there was an opportunity for audience questions. This panel session was facilitated by Amanda Leck, who went on to close the proceedings.

Some presentations can view viewed online at the [Google Community](#) page for DRANZSEN.

# Forum evaluation

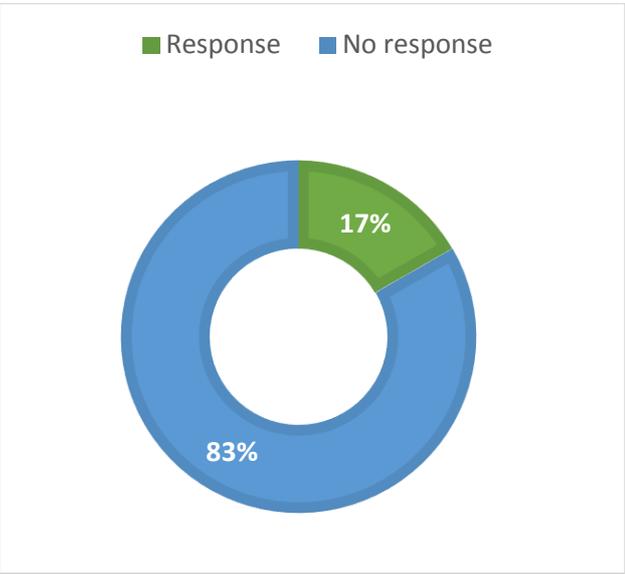


Figure 3: Response rate

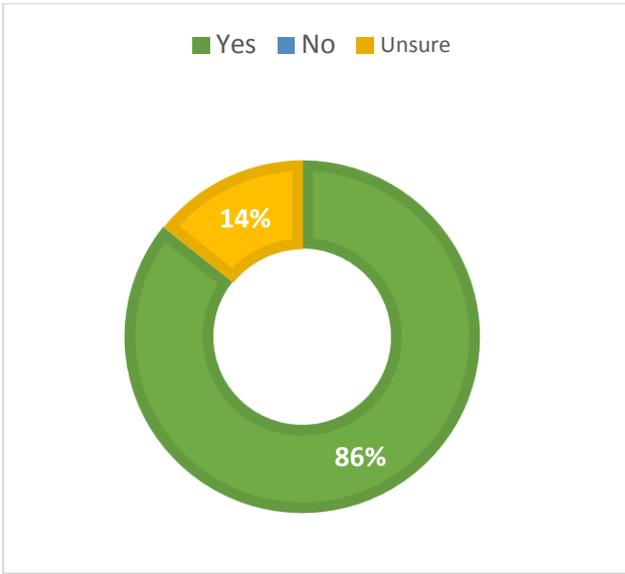


Figure 4: Enhanced your knowledge and understanding of the subject

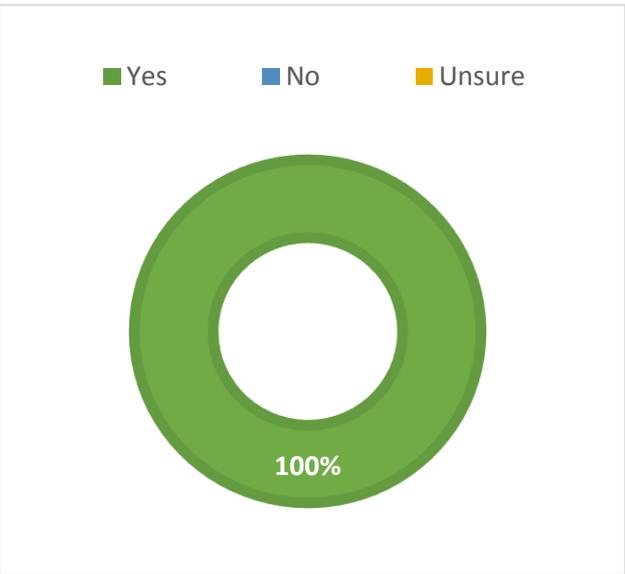


Figure 5: Did the speakers deliver information in a clear and concise manner?

## What did you like most about the session?

- Overview of the whole – issues, problems, possible solutions, network connections.
- Hearing about practice examples. Networking with agency and educational people.
- The level of expertise and the sharing of knowledge relevant to my role.
- The presentation from Parks & Wildlife.
- Networking opportunities. Research information.
- The workshop session.