E-Technology
Harnessing the potential to build safer communities

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Our partnership

**Drummond street overview** – a not for profit community service organisation which has been in lives of Victorian families since 1887. We engage with families throughout their lives, actively supporting them in caring for their family members through normal life transitions and in tough times. Stepfamilies Australia has been supporting stepparents and their families for 40 years.

**Millipede** – is an award-winning mobile development company with an extensive history of creative development for the health and welfare sectors.
What do we mean by technology?

• Whether connecting with others or accessing and engaging with services, “going online” has become an integral part of our everyday life.

• Technology in this workshop refers to a range of web-based internet enabled platforms and tools.

• Web 2.0 – websites that facilitates users interaction and collaboration with each other, can generate their own content and virtual communities – this includes social networking sites, blogs wikis, video sharing sites, and apps.
Why E-Technology? Advantages

• Technology is embedded with people: at least 89% of Australians own a smartphone; 21% only access the internet on mobile devices

• 79% of Australians over 15 access the internet in the past 12 months. Internet is a fast, efficient way of sharing information and keeping it up to date (compared to print documents, which date as soon as you print)

• What does it offer in the social service context- what does it offer in terms of awareness, signing posting to services, targeted information and resources, in a timely and cost effective manner and directly improve outcomes.
Social Services context

Drivers of change

• Growth in demand (how do we get to the right people with the right service)
• Fiscal restraint
• Government and consumers looking for more joined up, effective and cheaper resources (innovation)
• Growing focus on civic society and citizen-centred services
• Increased policy focus on individual choice and control – the personalisation agenda
• Need for proportional universalism to address health and wellbeing inequalities including wicked problems such as family violence
What informed our thinking: effective prevention and early intervention for family violence?

Public health and life span developmental approach to family health and wellbeing

• Science/research driven
• Interdisciplinary/inter-sectoral
• Population-based
• Describes the problem, its impact, and the associated risk and protective factors
• Derives directions for intervention, evaluation, and eventually, implementation
Spectrum of interventions for mental health promotion (Mrazek & Haggerty, 1994; cited in CDHAC, 2000)

- Efforts are needed across the spectrum of interventions to address the health risk issue within a population.
- Universal - the general population
- Selective - subgroups identified to be at risk
- Indicated - those with detectable signs and symptoms.
Why informed our thinking for effective prevention and early intervention for family violence?

WHO 2010 Seven Family Violence Prevention Strategies

Developing safe, stable and nurturing relationships between children and their parents and caregivers

• Developing life skills in children and adolescents
• Reducing the availability and harmful use of alcohol
• Reducing the access to guns, knives, and pesticides
• Promoting gender equality to prevent violence against women
• Changing cultural and social norms that support violence
• Victim identification, care and support programs
Family and Relationship Services

• As a sub-activity of Families and Children Activity of the Families and Communities Programme of DSS
• aim to strengthen family relationships, prevent breakdown and ensure the wellbeing and safety of children
• broad-based counselling and education to families of different forms and sizes
• primarily prevention and early intervention – post separation services
• targeted to critical family transition points including formation, extension, and separation.
So what role can we play in FV prevention and early intervention?

- Service development and delivery
- Program evaluation & research
- What is prevention and early intervention opportunity?
- What are the key family life course transitions at play to target
• Upstream prevention and early intervention needs to take place outside FV tertiary level services
• FaRS as a a quasi *universal* service sector
• The opportunity for a *public health approach* targeting *family* as setting, and vulnerable *life course transitions* and vulnerable *groups* (proportionate universalism)
• Placing a FV *lens* over our organisations and programs
• Two critical life transitions emerged from both service reviews (presentations) and evidence base: couples transitioning to parenthood and post-separation (including reforming families)
Why E-Technology? Key questions

• What existing skillsets and processes (points of engagement, assessment, interventions) can be utilised and optimised?
• What does the evidence say?
• What partnerships and coordination is needed?
• What re-orientation of our services need to occur?
• What workforce development is needed?
• Pathways from prevention to early intervention (question of dose and signposting support)?
• What vulnerable groups are not being serviced – or coming too late?
Universal andTargeted – the tech opportunity

Promotion Prevention

- strengthen family wellbeing

Early Intervention

- identify & respond to risks early

Level Of
Intensity
Of Services
Increases
As
Vulnerability
Increases

Treatment

- evidenced based treatment

Recovery

- support families to recover

Families
Self-select
More Intensive
Service Based
On A
Perceived
Higher Level
Of Risks
And Needs
Why E-Technology? Advantages

• Technology works best when used to augment or improve existing services, or to offer some innovative approaches to existing services.

• Developing good digital interventions requires working in partnership with many diverse groups. Especially the end user or target population which makes for more cohesive products – Co-Production methodology.
Why E-Technology? Advantages

• Service accessibility, confidentiality and privacy (men and other sub-populations)
• Offers time for reflection in communication – sometimes this is needed!
• Available 24/7 – self-paced, flexible, preferable for some and affordable
• Can free are organisations to focus face to face on the most vulnerable - intensive
Co-Production – the process

**Evidence**
- Universal evidence based programs & practice
- Universal risk and protective factors
- Universal outcomes

**Co-design**
- Co-produce program logic including interventions purpose & functionality
- Building the app

**Co-Review**
- End user testing look, feel, functionality

**Review with end users**
- using fidelity data – looking for improvements in useability or added extras
- Ongoing maintenance
Using technology to keep families safe

• New technologies offer individuals an innovative, exciting and confidential platform to provide a space for contemporary families to better navigate normal family life issues as a starting point for more intensive supports to be accessed.

• Is the best way to share information, and keep it up to date

• Apps can be downloaded once, then don’t have to rely on fast internet connections
Using technology to keep families safe

• Over the past two years drummond street services and Millipede have partnered to trial and develop the use of mobile apps to increase the reach to families at key life course transition points, which are recognised as having known vulnerabilities to a range of health and wellbeing risks including family violence onset. Research shows that smart phone applications have a positive population reach with families and couples going through transitional life stages.

• Apps are also a great way of prevention as they have the potential to deliver large amount of information in a confidential and streamline manner
MyMob engages modern, changing and expanding families by offering a fun and practical communication tool that fosters positive communication in situations when you can’t all be together.

www.mymob.com
MyMob
What are the problems it is trying to solve.

• High risk time for the onset of a range of health and wellbeing issues
• Issues impact on both parents as well as long term outcomes for children
• Doesn’t end with separation and reformation often need to learn new ways of being and communicating
MyMob
What are the problems it is trying to solve.

• Families are viewed as learners and the app is a direct response to learner needs – re-learning non-conflictual ways of communicating

• A safe platform for family to engage and navigate everyday life – family diary (parenting arrangements) kids profiles (sizes important info) message board and access to resources

• You decide who your mob is
MyMob
MyMob
MyMob

- Favourites
- Wishlist

- Colour: Purple and pink and blue
- TV Shows: Donat
- Movies: Frozen
- Places: Nana's house and the library
- Food: Ice cream yum!

Vital Stats
- Height: 103
- Shirt Size: M
- Pants Size: M
- Shoe Size: 6
MyMob - Learnings

• Safety focus (profanity filter)
• Think accessibility
• Don’t reinvent the wheel – offline polices (privacy confidentiality etc can be easily adapted)
• Do your research (Co-production process)
• Let go of the fear of exclusion – enhancing face to face not replacing it – signposting to the right service at the right time – client empowerment
What the Family?! 

• Targeted those transitioning to parenthood 
  • Pregnant and new parents (including men!) 

• For prevention and early intervention 

• Across multi-risks  
  • Mental Illness  
  • Family Violence  
  • Substance Abuse  
  • Child Abuse and Neglect 

(Copyright - Drummond Street Services)
What is the problem it is trying to solve.

- Initially funded for 4 years by William Buckland (2007-11)
- Involved research, service development & delivery, and evaluation
- Partnered with local universal Perinatal and first-to-know services to
  - Re-orient services and build capacity for prevention and pathways to early interventions
  - Prevention intervention seminars
  - Early Intervention Screening Tool – adapted into a app
What the Family?!
What is the problem it is trying to solve.

- Research identified 10 *early* (as distinct from *tertiary* level) risk factors – tipsheets focused on these and signposted to local services

- 10 FV prevention and early intervention practice principles - checklist

- Developed and evaluated FaRS Early Interventions for families ‘at risk’
  - 1:1 Parent Support Sessions
  - Hands on Parenting Education and Support (HOPE) - for the most vulnerable
  - Family Counselling (and Guide)
What the Family?!
What is the problem it is trying to solve.

• High risk time for the onset of a range of health and wellbeing issues
• Issues impact on both parents – how well do we engage men – fathers as well as long term outcomes for children
What the Family?!

www.whatthefamily.com.au
What the Family?!
What the Family

So you're on the family rollercoaster ... and maybe the ups and downs are a bit hard to take?

That's pretty normal. And it's good to look for help before anything goes off the tracks.

Explore this app to find tips and support for each aspect of this new challenge in your life.
What the Family?!
• Healthy vs. unhealthy coping
• More on power and control within a relationship
• Dealing with anger – what is healthy
• Alcohol/dugs and raising kids
• Tips for grandparents – this tip sheet can be given to grandparents
• Community connection and kids/ Importance of connection
• Dealing with intrusive in-laws
• How to read signs that past experiences are affecting a loved one
• Being money wise
• Money Worries
• Healthy sleep for adults
WHEN TO SEEK HELP

» Relationship concerns

» Financial hardship

» If you are crying more than the baby!

» If you feel your emotions and moods are stopping you from doing what you really want to do (e.g. too depressed or anxious to go on a picnic with friends).

» You can’t sleep – even when you have the opportunity (getting SOME sleep is vital for mental health).

» You find yourself withdrawing from people and just want to hide under the doona.

» You lose interest in the things you used to love.
WHO CAN SUPPORT YOU?

» Think about who can help – friends, family, each other.

» Offer to babysit other people’s children and then they may have yours.

» Join groups and clubs of people with similar aged children.

» Check out occasional care options through your Council.

» Talk to your local GP and/or Maternal & Child Health Nurse.

» Consider family and parenting services in your area.

» Call a local counselling service.

» Ring a help line.
What the Family?!  
Key Learnings

• Couples transitioning to parenthood are significant users of technology for information
• Information empowers new parents to think about issues – see how they are going and seek support if the need it
• Language, look and feel are important – parents keep coming back
Why E-Technology? Pitfalls

• So often interventions are taken from one context and implemented in another, without any thought for how this will impact on effectiveness.

• Interventions can try to be all things to all people, however one size does not fit all, and developing a good, effective intervention requires clear definition of your target population, which goes beyond mere descriptive demographics.

• Ongoing maintenance, sustainability and updating – who will take responsibility (and resource) these tasks?
Other ideas - questions?
THANK YOU!