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| Higher Education and Skills Group**Participation Branch Memo****Department of Education and Early Childhood Development** |

***NUMBER:*** *2014 / 07 / 28*

**TO: Learn Local organisations and LLENs**

**FROM:** Bronwen Heathfield, Director, Participation Branch

**DATE:** 28 July 2014

**SUBJECT:** *Release of DEECD’s Vulnerable Children Action Plan*

**ACTIONS / CRITICAL DATES:**

* Learn Local organisations and LLENs are encouraged to support the goals and actions set out in the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development’s *Vulnerable Children’s Action Plan* that are being undertaken to improve educational and developmental outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.
* The Action Plan is available at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/department/Pages/vcap.aspx>

In May 2013 the whole of government *Victoria’s Vulnerable Children: Our Shared Responsibility Strategy 2013-2022* was released. Learning and development services play a key role in supporting the Strategy’s goals to prevent abuse and neglect, to act earlier when children are vulnerable, and to improve outcomes for children in statutory care.

The Department’s *Vulnerable Children Action Plan* (the Action Plan), released on 9 July 2014, aims to support the Strategy’s goals by achieving system reform in four priority areas:

1. A more accountable learning and development system
2. An empowered workforce that responds effectively to vulnerability
3. Strengthened engagement of children, young people and families
4. An increased focus on a partnership approach

System reform will be achieved via a range of activities including Children and Youth Area Partnerships which will provide a mechanism for better local coordination of services for vulnerable young people, and improved data and evidence to identify, monitor and project outcomes for vulnerable young people.

A focus of the Action Plan is also on achieving practice change within early years, schools and higher education and skills in order to strengthen workforce capacity and the response of these services to vulnerability.

LLENs play a key role across Victoria in brokering partnerships with local stakeholders to assist vulnerable young people. LLENs are encouraged to consider the actions and priorities of the Action Plan to see how they align with their work as appropriate.

Learn Local organisation’s ability to provide training to vulnerable young people and their families is further strengthened and highlighted in the Action Plan through the Family Learning Partnership project. This 12 month trial will encourage parents to progress to further learning while supporting their children’s learning.

The Action Plan emphasises young people in out of home care as a key cohort. The existing Young People Transitioning from Care Initiative, which waives student tuition fees for learners currently in or exiting out-of-home care and accessing government subsidised training, will continue to be supported and monitored.

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