

### Overview

Launched by Federal Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth, Peter Garrett MP, in May 2013 the National Career Development strategy committed over \$6.1 million for projects to further the career development of young people.

The Strategy sets the direction for future approaches to career development that will benefit both individuals and the productivity of Australia.

*“Making Career Connections”* includes both a range of new initiatives and also expands on existing projects that are currently working well and accelerates them to continue to equip students with the skills and knowledge to make effective career decisions.”

Included in the suite of Programs the Minister announced funding allocated to expand Youth Connects’ Parents as Career Transition Support (PACTS) Facilitator Training. This will support over 700 facilitators to deliver workshops to over 28,000 parents across Australia to help their children make effective career choices.

### PACTS Program Overview

The Parents As Career Transition Support (PACTS) program was developed in 2003 in recognition of the significant impact that parents have on the career and transition decisions of their children. PACTS aims to reach those parents who have limited knowledge to support their children through key transitional points.

PACTS serves as a model of good practice for parent engagement in youth transitions. Its design and scope reflect research findings that encouraging and training parents and families to provide informed transition support in an especially effective way to promote educational and vocational achievement for young people who encounter barriers to smooth transitions.

PACTS targets small groups of parents and supportive adults through interactive workshops facilitated by trained and professional PACTS Facilitators. Generally delivered over two sessions with a third session being optional, participants engage in casual, informal conversations about careers and transitions, local education and training options and up-to-date transitional information, as well as ideas and activities for engaging in careers conversations with young people.

The PACTS program equips parents to support their children and teenagers to make informed choices. The program is tailored to the needs of different cohorts of families at specific transition points, and aims to increase parents’ confidence. The emphasis of PACTS is on increasing access to knowledge about careers and transitions and also about learning how to have positive and informed conversations with young people about their transition choices and options.

### For more information:

Daniela Ascone  
General Manager, Youth Connect  
Ph: 03 8306 6300  
Email: [d.ascone@youthconnect.com.au](mailto:d.ascone@youthconnect.com.au)



## What is PACTS?

PACTS is a series of workshops and resources developed to provide parents with up-to-date information about career transition that enables them to support their teenager when they are making career transition decisions. A set of two or three workshops are offered that aim to provide basic information to bridge the gap between what parents did when they left school (which is what they often base their advice on) and what the options are when leaving school now.

PACTS began as one of twenty Career and Transition Pilot Projects funded by the Department of Education, Science and Training from 2002 to 2005.

## Why was PACTS developed?

PACTS is another part of the transition jigsaw, and started out as an extension of the Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL) Transition Project, which provides individual assistance to young people in the school environment. Working with parents of young people in the Transition Project gave us insight into their lack of knowledge about career transition information and encouraged us to look for ways to help them better understand career transition today. In the development of the program, research was conducted into overseas models as well as we surveyed parents and students.



The interim results of surveys conducted by the BSL research team showed:

### Parents

- 85% of parents have specific concerns about their child's transition
- 100% of parents feel it is important for them to be involved in their child's transition
- Only 20% feel that they have enough knowledge about choices
- Parents clearly occupy an important position with 75% having discussed the options available after finishing school with their child, and the same number saying that their child has wanted their input

### Students

- Two thirds of students want more information about career transition
- Parents and teachers are the second most likely groups to discuss options with after friends
- Around 80% say they would like help from parents in making a decision, and around 90% have specific ideas about what they would like
- Discussing careers with parents themselves was ranked significantly higher than other options

*“Now I can see that having a university degree isn't the only way to have a meaningful career, and particularly now that having this son who's got an interesting lot of issues and obviously university wouldn't be his kettle of fish it's been fantastic for me to know all the options available for him. To see everything in a positive light instead of thinking 'oh no what is he going to do?' I can see 'oh well you've got lots of fantastic options out there.”* Feedback – PACTS Workshop Participant, 2012

## What is in the PACTS workshops?

The workshops are supported by the Workshop Handbook, which includes all the information covered in the three workshops as well as other information that parents might find useful, such as websites and contacts.

The following outlines the content of each PACTS workshop:

### Workshop One – Beginning to Explore

- Finding a place to start
- The 7 Hats of Confident Parents (when talking about Careers)
- Communicating to young people about careers
- Occupational categories
- Using the Job Guide
- Identifying interests and skills

### Workshop Two – Career and Transition Services

- Learning Pathways Plans
- Career services at school
- Training and further education options
- Apprenticeships and Traineeships
- Group Training Organisations



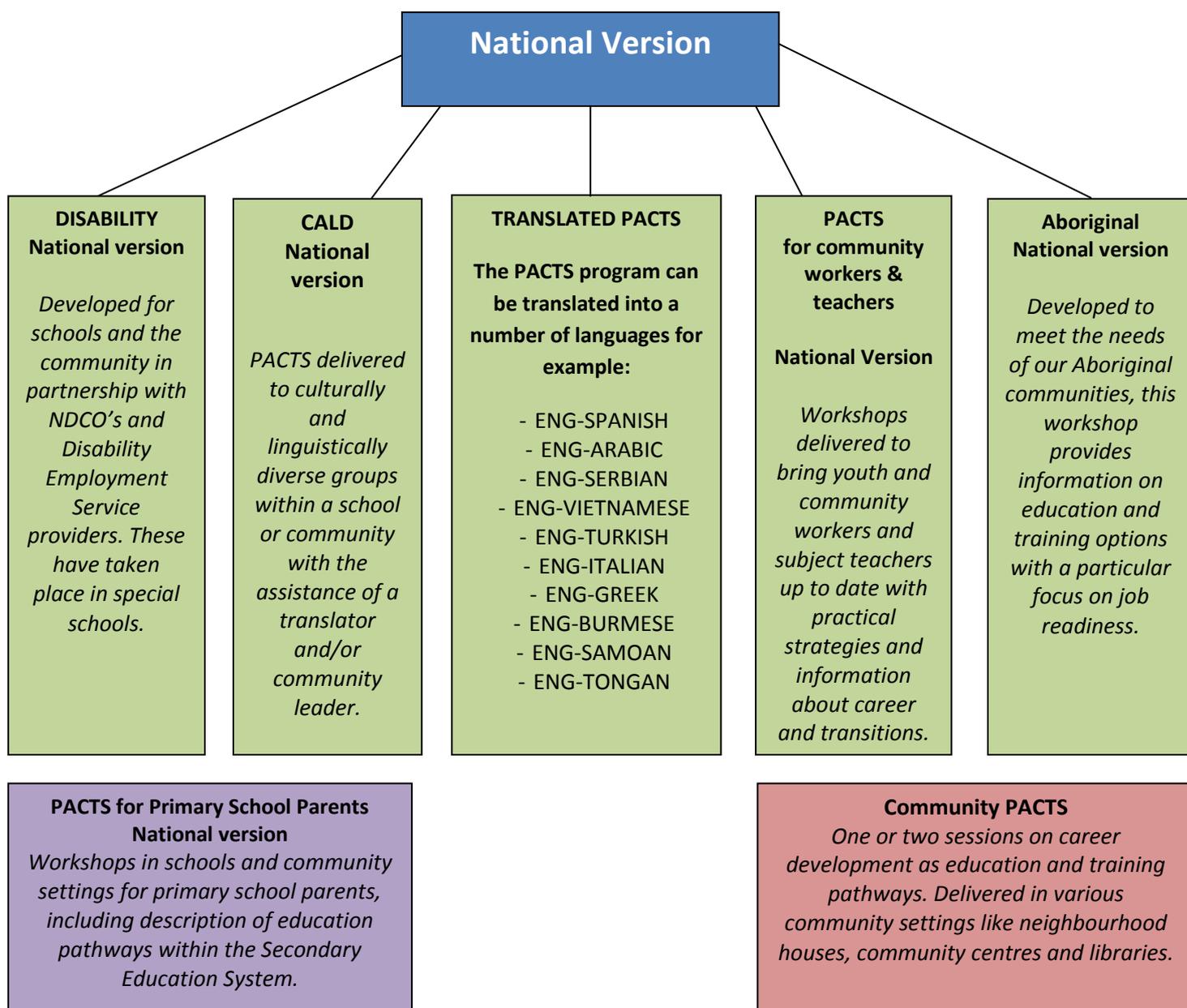
### Workshop Three - Jobs

- Stages of job hunting
- Resumes and Cover letters
- Young people and telephones
- Centrelink, Job Services Australia, Youth Connections and other programs
- Interview skills
- The First Job- What young people need to know about their rights and responsibilities.



*“Meeting together with other parents to talk ‘adult’ about careers has been great. It’s a relief to hear other parents have the same issues and questions from their kids.”* – Feedback from PACTS Workshop Participant

## Program Versions



### Notes:

\*\*Trained PACTS Facilitators have access to all program versions

\*\*We encourage trained PACTS Facilitators to engage with specialist agencies/service providers who can assist with the delivery of some of the versions noted above.

*“This has opened our eyes to what’s out there, now we know more to help our two younger children.” -*

Feedback PACTS Participant

## Facilitator Training Overview

### Some key points:

- Two days interactive face to face training
- Generally 9am to 4pm each day
- Maximum of 20 participants
- Venue and catering will be arranged and paid for by Youth Connect.

Note for host organisations: Venue requirements: seating and space for 20 participants plus 10 additional seats for PACTS session which is delivered on Day 2 of the training. Boardroom style seating preferred

Equipment requirements: data projector and screen, internet access

### Program Outline:

#### Day 1

- Aims, History & Objectives of the PACTS program
- Understanding the PACTS handbook; participants are provided with an in depth overview of the workshop content and how to facilitate discussions with parents, incorporate activities and encourage parents to discuss careers with their child
- Successful parental engagement strategies
- Tools and resources which can be incorporated into the delivery of PACTS

#### Day 2

- Implementing the program within your school and community
- Working in partnership with other service providers to enhance delivery
- Tailoring the program to meet specific cohorts
- Participants will learn more about the PACTS kit and supports provided to trained facilitators.
- Participants will be asked to invite a group of parents to an afternoon/morning express PACTS session (3 hours) – newly trained facilitators will have an opportunity to facilitate this workshop with the support of Youth Connect staff members.

### For each participant, this includes:

- Two days of face-to-face training (PACTS National Program – State Specific version)
- All participants will obtain a PACTS Kit which includes:
  - PACTS implementation Guide: Step by step instructions to implement PACTS in schools/community
  - PACTS workshop Handbook: Incorporates all the information in the workshops
  - PACTS Facilitators Workshop Plan: Session plans for conducting each PACTS workshop
  - PACTS Facilitators Kit: for advertising, communications etc.
- Membership to the Youth Connect PACTS National Network until December 2014 and access to all resources online.
- Support and advice following the training

### Feedback from newly trained PACTS Facilitators:

Responses from evaluations collated from PACTS Facilitator training delivered in 2013.

#### Which parts of Day 1 were most helpful and why?

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|--|---|
| 'Discussion and PACTS handbook'  | 'Networking with other agencies and teachers during lunch'      |
| 'Examples of how the training works in real life'  | 'The materials (physical resources); training kit of the year!' |
| 'Role play'  | 'Practice PACTS facilitation session'                           |
| 'Communicating with young people about careers section and the 7 hats information helpful' |   |
| 'The implementing of the PACTS program it was practical and helpful'                       |   |
| 'Unpacking the running of each workshop and suggested methods of delivery'                 |   |

#### Which parts of Day 2 were most helpful and why?

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|---|--|
| 'Going through "mock" session with the parents'   | 'Going through the online portal to see all the resources' |
| 'The implementation of PACTS and discussion with parents'   |  |
| 'Engaging in talk about parents Childs career opportunities'  |  |
| 'Parent workshop session'   | 'Practising the workshop delivery with "real parents"'     |
| 'The workbook and running the session with "real parents" brought everything together'                              |  |
| 'Parent training session was very helpful; great to see parent interaction and the value they place on the program' |  |

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Who can apply for a PACTS Facilitator Training Funded Place?**

Employees or volunteers from the following can apply who meet the eligibility criteria:

- Youth Connections providers
- Partnership Brokers
- JSA/DES representatives
- Indigenous Pathways Coordinators
- National Disability Coordination Officers
- VET in Schools Coordinators/Guidance Officers/Careers Counsellors
- Careers Advisors (private practice)
- TAFE/University representatives
- Representatives from Catholic, Independent Schools
- Representatives from Alternative/Community Education providers
- Local Government Youth/Family Services
- Representatives from Multicultural Support Associations
- Migrant Resource Centres
- Representatives from Department of Communities/Department of Human Services etc
- Other community organisations that are delivering parent engagement programs

### **How is my application assessed?**

Each application is assessed by Youth Connect staff for eligibility.

### **What happens once you submit an application for a PACTS Facilitator Training Funded Place?**

Once the applications have been assessed and the outcomes known, all applicants will be notified in writing. In the majority of cases, applicants are notified within six weeks.

### **Will Youth Connect cover any costs associated with travel and accommodation requirements for the purpose of attending the two-day training?**

All costs associated with travel and accommodation will need to be covered by the participants.

### **What happens if I am awarded a place?**

Applicants will receive notification of the outcome via email including the conditions of the place and a place acceptance/agreement form will be sent to recipients.

### **I can only attend one day training and not both days; will I still obtain a Certificate of Participation and be deemed a trained PACTS Facilitator?**

All participants must attend both days in order to be deemed a PACTS Facilitator, have access to the support, materials and membership.

### **When will the training take place?**

Youth Connect will work closely with key agencies (our "Host Agencies") to set training day dates. Successful applications will be provided with sufficient notice.

### **Should I be awarded a funded place and complete the two-day PACTS Facilitator Training, can I charge parents to attend the workshops I deliver?**

No, we want to ensure that all parents and families can attend a PACTS workshop which is delivered by a Youth Connect trained PACTS Facilitator without any cost associated with attending considered a barrier to engaging with parents and families. As part of the two-day PACTS Facilitator training, participants will be provided with information on how to cover any costs associated with the delivery of the program including but not limited to printing of materials, catering, staff delivery time or venue hire etc.

Have a question? If so, please email [pacts@youthconnect.com.au](mailto:pacts@youthconnect.com.au)