



Brimbank Melton Community Legal Centre

A PROGRAM OF COMMUNITY WEST INC.

THE VALUE OF LEARNING LAW IN OUR LAND, PILOT PROJECT 2013

Integrating best practice community legal education into adult English language courses through innovative professional development training and curriculum development.

Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.



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- Rob Hulls, Director of Innovative Justice Centre RMIT and former Victorian Attorney General
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- Transport Accident Commission
- Flemington Kensington Community Legal Centre
- Consumer Action Law Centre
- Money Help
- Financial and Consumer Rights Council
- The Tenants Union of Victoria
- Salvation Army Social Housing Service
- Social Security Rights Victoria
- Jobwatch
- Victoria Legal Aid

Education Providers:

- Participating teachers and students
- Victoria University
- Wyndham Community Education Centre
- Community West
- Yarraville Community Centre
- Laverton Learn Local

Steering Group Committee:

- Footscray Community Legal Centre
- Wyndham Community Legal Centre
- Wyndham Community Education Centre
- Victoria Legal Aid
- Victoria University
- Brimbank Melton Community Legal Program team
- Community West Education Program team

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Introduction

This report is based on the evaluation and findings of the *Learning Law in our Land* community legal education pilot project 2013, funded by the Victoria Law Foundation. Community West - through the Brimbank Melton Community Legal Centre (BMCLC) – delivered the innovative community legal education strategy with a view to improve legal literacy of adult learners in Melbourne’s western metropolitan region.

Learning Law in our Land is a targeted professional development program offered to adult educators who provide literacy, learning and numeracy skills to adult learners. The program aims to give adult educators the confidence, training and resources to incorporate basic early intervention legal and referral information into their classrooms.

Findings

- Adult educators should be encouraged to disseminate legal and referral information to their students, as they are well-placed to provide early intervention information in the classroom context.
- Professional development for adult educators is an engaging and effective way for the legal sector to disseminate legal and referral information to the adult education sector.
- Adult learners enjoy learning about the law in the classroom context and find learning about basic legal and referral information extremely relevant and useful.

Executive Summary

What were we trying to do?

Learning Law in our Land was piloted as an innovative interdisciplinary community strengthening and legal education strategy. It aimed to:

- simplify and streamline legal and referral information for a broader Community Legal Education (CLE) audience;
- facilitate opportunities for train the trainer CLE – equip and empower adult educators to become important information intermediaries for their students;
- develop and improve legal literacy for adult learners, many of whom come from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds; and
- provide targeted and well-researched multidisciplinary CLE leadership, and best practice evaluation strategies.

What did we do?

- We researched and developed 12 targeted training modules and corresponding resources and classroom materials for adult educators to integrate basic legal and referral education into English language courses across the western metropolitan region.
- We mapped, analysed and incorporated existing legal education and information resources into the modules.
- We delivered a three day train the trainer professional development to 18 adult educators from the western metropolitan region.
- Adult educators piloted curriculum resources, lesson plans and interactive activities in 30 classes across the western metropolitan region.
- We piloted and tested best practice and creative evaluation strategies.

What happened?

- Improved connections were developed between the education and legal sectors.
- Capacity building: teachers and students were empowered by knowing their rights and responsibilities, and how to assert them.
- Improved legal literacy and confidence was built among adult learners.
- Broad and targeted dissemination of legal referral pathway information and publications took place.

What was successful?

Our evaluation showed overwhelmingly positive feedback for the:

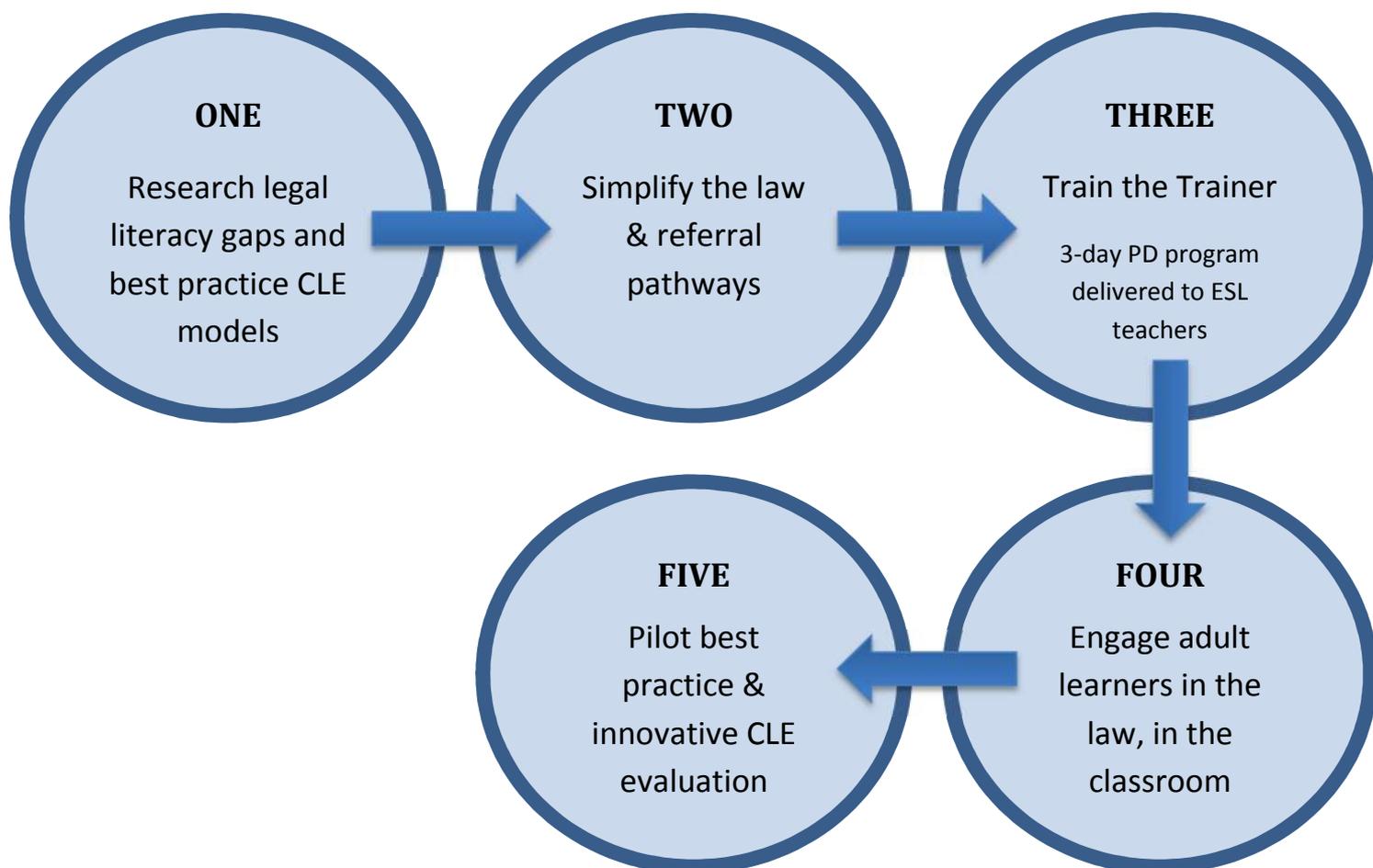
- professional development workshop and curriculum pilot;
- streamlined curriculum resource guides, lesson plans and activities responding to different literacy levels and recognising individual learning styles and sensory modalities;
- training and resources unpacking legal information into basic and key messages; and
- creative incorporation of evaluation into the experiential learning process.

1. Background

1.1 Community West Programs

Community West is a leading multidisciplinary non-government agency that provides essential community services in Melbourne’s western suburbs, with particular focus on the Brimbank, Melton and Bacchus Marsh communities. Community West runs the Brimbank Melton Community legal Centre (BMCLC), Adult Education Services, Family Services and Community Engagement and Development Programs. Its services aim to play an integral role in community strengthening in Melbourne’s western metropolitan suburbs.

1.2 Project Strategy



1.3 Why?

1.3.1 Fostering multidisciplinary community legal education strategies

BMCLC Program:

The program provides free legal assistance to people who live, work or study in the Melbourne's western suburbs. Through the provision of legal advice and casework, the program identified common legal issues and legal literacy gaps prevalent in the local community.

Response:

The program advocates for the importance of empowering members of the community with legal information, CLE and the distribution of referral support service publications.



Education Program:

The program is committed to providing opportunities for all Victorian residents to access quality community education programs.

Adult educators within Community West's program expressed that students were not equipped with basic knowledge about simple legal rights and responsibilities.

Response:

The program sees the importance of assisting people who live in the western suburbs to achieve their goals and build their skills. It sees the importance of equipping students with early interventionist information that affects their everyday lives.



- Community West, as a multidisciplinary service provider and organisation proactively involved in its local community, recognised a need to help adult educators and learners access legal and referral pathway information.
- *Learning Law in our Land* aligned well with Community West's vision to raise community understanding of, and access to, a better and more responsive justice system.
- The project seeks to provide leadership in multidisciplinary community strengthening and early intervention and prevention strategies in Melbourne's western metropolitan region.

1.3.2 Addressing unmet legal need

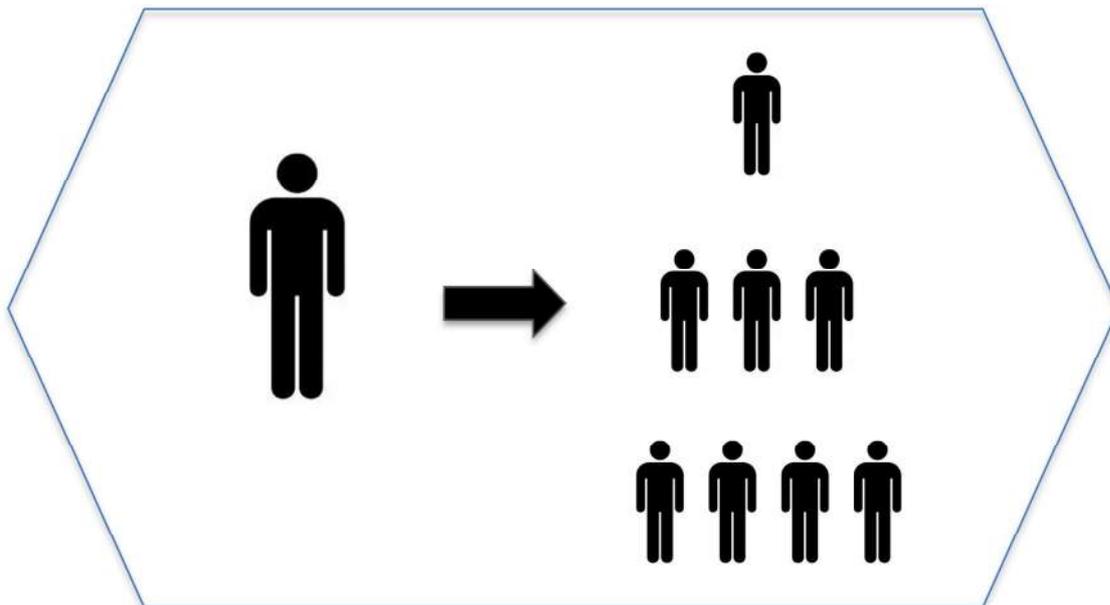
In August 2012 the *Legal Australia-Wide Survey: Legal Need in Victoria* report was released nationwide.¹ The report identified common barriers to resolving legal issues and matters included unawareness or confusion about the legal nature of the problems, legal rights, legal services and possible legal solutions.²

In particular, the report identified that the following groups experienced a reduced capacity to address their legal problems³:

- people from non-English speaking backgrounds;
- people who derive their main source of income from government payments; and
- middle-aged people who are unemployed.

One of the report's primary recommendations was the use of non-legal professionals as gateways to targeted legal information and services for vulnerable groups. Hence, the report highlighted that:

*Non-legal professionals could be more formally trained and equipped to identify legal problems and to more systematically provide timely referral to legal information and advice services.*⁴



¹ Coumarelos, C, 'Legal Australia-Wide Survey: legal need in Victoria', (Report, Law and Justice Foundation of NSW, 2012)

² Ibid.31 and 32

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

1.3.3 Targeting a broader community audience with legal information

The western metropolitan region is home to a rich multicultural community.

Meet some of our students who contribute to the rich adult learning environment at Community West and who participated in the *Learning Law in our Land* pilot:



Meet Jang:

Jang is a mother of three who migrated to Australia from East Timor in 1989.

She likes going to school to learn English because she feels that she can create a better life for her children in Australia by building her skills.

"I am happy that I have numbers for places that can give me help. I did not know I can speak to an interpreter."

At school Jang enjoys talking with and listening to friends. She likes to share her recipes with her classmates.

Meet Thi:

Thi is a mother of three who migrated to Australia in 1993.

She enjoys learning about the law.

"I liked when we made a pretend Court and I was the judge – it was good to learn about Legal Aid help numbers."

Meet Jia Hua:

Jia Hua was born in China and came to Australia in 1996.

He enjoys learning about the law through games and artistic activities.

"I remember information about the law better when we do fun activities and laugh together."

Meet Mai:

Mai migrated to Australia in 2008.

With a big smile Mai exclaims,

"I love coming to learn about the law because it helps me understand rules more. It is good to learn about who can help you."

Mai also enthusiastically explains that her classmates and teacher are like family.

"It is good to learn from my teacher about where to get help. He is like a son, I can always ask him questions."

2. Learning Law in our Land 2013 Pilot at a glance

Research:

250+ Legal
Literacy Surveys
distributed to
adult learners

85 CLE
resources
researched

200+ hrs focus
group, steering
committee and
evaluation

Curriculum:

12 CLE
Modules

12 recorded
interviews
with industry
experts

11 Nutshell
Curriculum
Guides
developed

11 referral
pathway flyers
produced

13 Lesson Plans
developed in line
with Australian
Core Skills
Framework

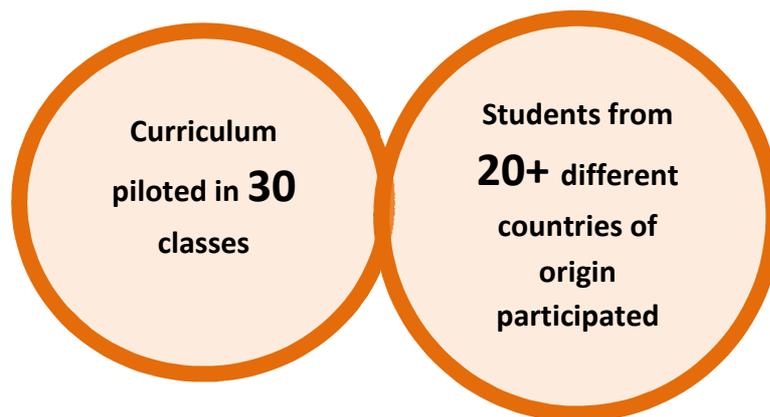
50+ referral
pathways
discussed with
teachers at PD

40 interactive
activity
resources
developed

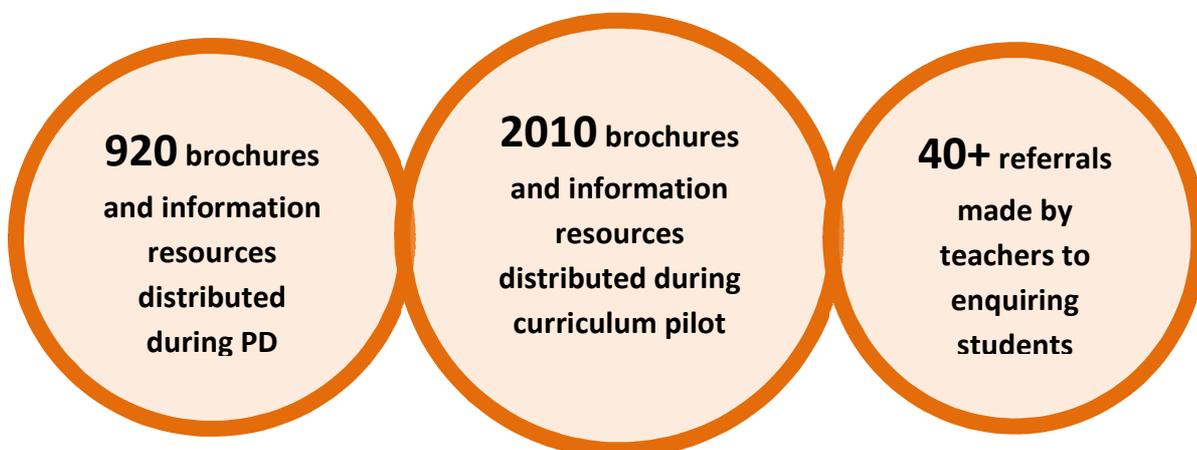
Professional Development:



Curriculum Pilot:



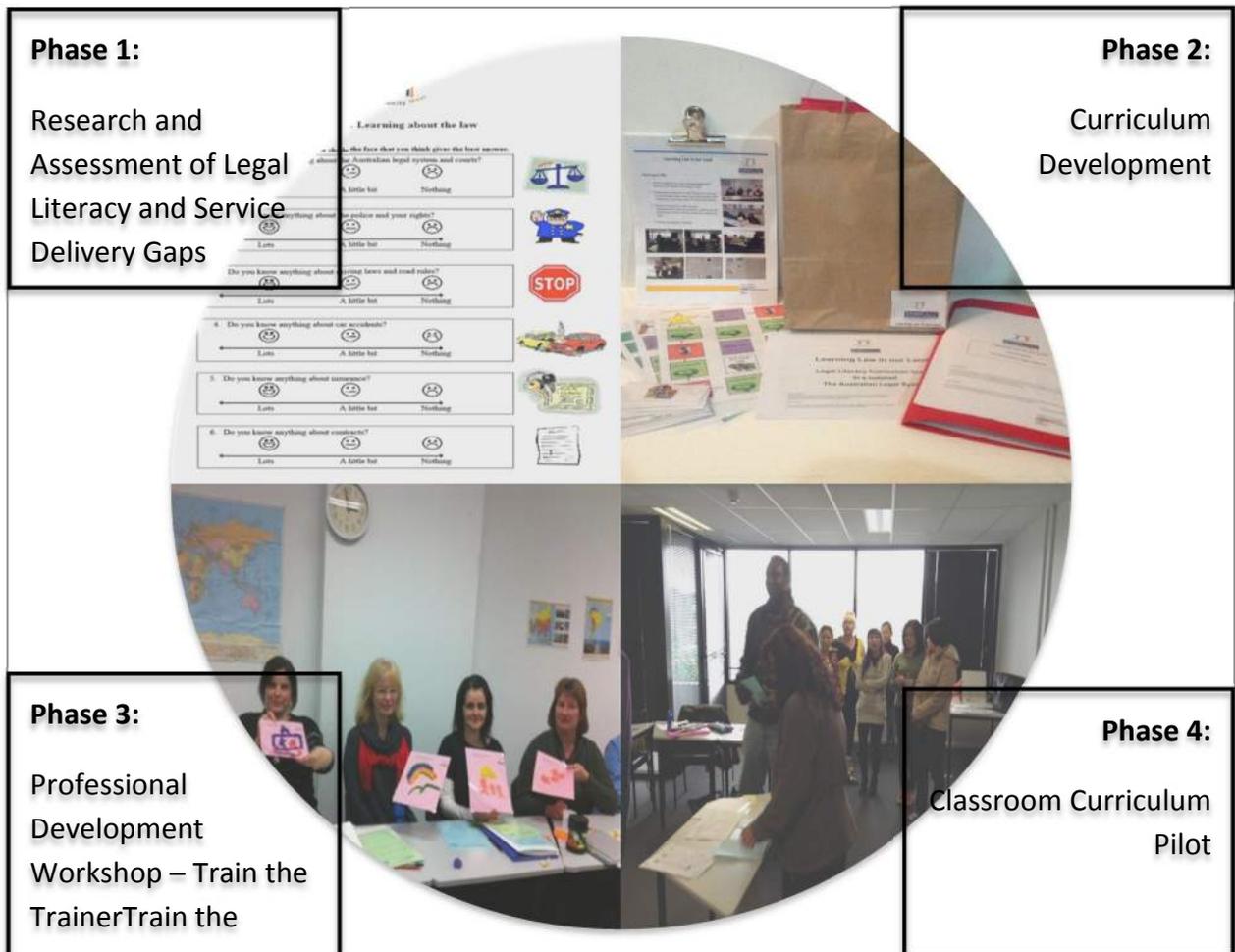
Distribution of legal information, brochures and resources:



3. Learning Law in our Land Journey

Pilot Overview and Project Methodology

The project can be divided into four key phases, each involving elements of participatory evaluation and focus testing.



Refer to Appendix 1 for the detailed project milestone list.

PHASE 1: RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT OF LEGAL LITERACY AND SERVICE GAPS

ONE

Research legal literacy gaps and best practice CLE models

The first phase of the project involved conducting targeted research to assess legal literacy needs, service gaps and best practice CLE models.

It involved the following tasks, including:

- i) Literature Review;
- ii) Steering Committee;
- iii) Student Visual Legal Literacy Survey; and
- iv) Focus groups with adult educators.

i) Literature Review

An extensive literature review was undertaken to research best practice community legal education resources and models presently available in Victoria. The initial literature review resulted in further investigation of best practice training, teaching, and learning resources. Additionally, a general service map of best practice CLE models tailored to adult educators and English learners on an international level was compiled (refer to Appendix 2).

Following this work, the professional development component of the project was designed to make best practice curriculum resources easily available to adult educators. 11 streamlined *Learning Law in our Land* Curriculum in a Nutshell Resources Guides were created.

Key Findings:

- a wealth of CLE resources and legal information is available online;
- locating appropriate CLE resources can be time consuming, as confirmed by focus groups conducted with adult educators;
- there is a need to demystify the law for adult learners;
- plain language principles should be applied with a combined focus on consultation with the target audience (teachers and students);
- CLE professional development training would be effective if targeted at non-legal professionals to improve early intervention distribution of CLE resources and legal information publications; and
- successful best practice CLE models targeted at English learners in Canada informed the plain language principles and the simplification of legal information recommendation.

ii) Steering Committee

An interdisciplinary steering committee was established at the commencement of the project. The steering committee provided a perfect platform for industry experts to express the needs of ESL learners, teachers and lawyers. Constructive feedback was provided by the steering committee throughout the course of the project and the committee demonstrated a shared interest in improving legal literacy in the western metropolitan region.

Some of the key recommendations provided by the steering committee included:

- the use of plain language principles in training to ensure that end-users can find the information they need, understand it and take action to seek legal help;
- the need for centralization, categorization and streamlining of CLE resources;
- the need to appropriately define the role of a non-legally trained information intermediary (the difference between legal information and advice); and
- the provision of comprehensive professional development training, resources and support to adult educators to simplify incorporating basic legal information into the curriculum.

iii) Student Visual Legal Literacy Survey

“Students enjoyed discussing pictures featured on the survey and were excited to share what they knew about the law and where to get help- usually its difficult to explain surveys to lower level literacy groups but this one worked a treat.”

ESL Teacher, Community West



In January 2013 a visual legal literacy survey was distributed to 115 adult learners in the west to ensure that *Learning Law in our Land* provided targeted legal information to students. Adult educators who administered the survey provided positive feedback about students' comprehension and understanding.

See Appendices 3 and 4 for the survey and a detailed report on legal literacy gaps.

Key Findings:

- focus testing with the end CLE audience at each stage of curriculum development is important to ensure usability;
- the curriculum should identify and cater for different literacy needs (low, medium and high);
- there is a variety of common legal information gaps;
- students demonstrated interest in learning more about the law and help services;
- a positive relationship of trust is shared between students and their teachers; and
- students demonstrated a belief that their teachers could assist them to learn more about the law.

For each question please check the face that you think gives the best answer.

1. Do you know anything about the police and your rights?
Lots A little bit Nothing

2. Do you know anything about driving laws and road rules?
Lots A little bit Nothing

3. Do you know anything about car accidents?
Lots A little bit Nothing

4. Do you know anything about insurance?
Lots A little bit Nothing

5. Do you know anything about...
Lots A little bit Nothing

funded by a grant from



iv) Focus Groups - Adult ESL Educator Professional Development

Needs:

In January 2013 adult educators participated in two focus groups, and completed a supplementary survey to assess and identify (a) professional needs of teachers and (b) student needs.

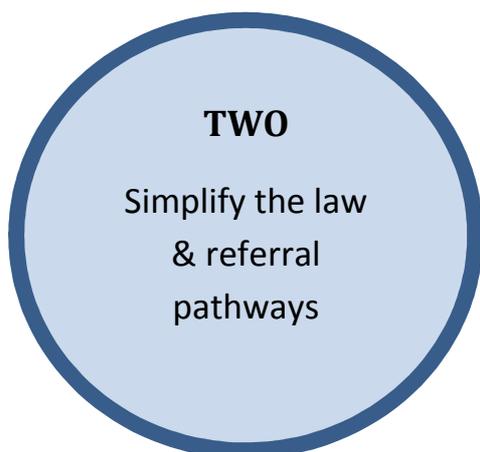
Refer to Appendix 4 for a full list of the focus group questions, recommendations and relevant survey report.

The focus groups provided invaluable information that clearly identified the project's audience and needs. The curriculum was then tailored specifically to address the needs of teachers as non-legal information intermediaries.

Key Findings:

- a need to diversify the curriculum resources and activities available for low and medium literacy audiences;
- a need for streamlined resources linked to adult learning and assessment outcomes (i.e. learning to fill in forms), due to time constraints faced by teachers to research and verify materials;
- a need to make existing referral pathway information, publications and resources more accessible to adult educators and learners;
- significant enthusiasm from educators for professional development training; and
- utility in focus testing as a best practice strategy that helps to clearly define CLE audiences and allows teachers' and students' needs to be more readily determined.

PHASE 2: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT



“The law is complex, but this project strikes at the very heart of a community lawyer’s job: to unpack, simplify and make early interventionist legal and referral pathway information accessible to a wider audience.”

Lawyer from BMCLC, Community West

Phase Two was underpinned by a desire to create the curriculum and professional development materials that would facilitate active engagement and directly address the needs of teachers and adult learners.

The curriculum development was informed by three key aims, including to:

- i) unpack the law and referral pathways into simple and accessible key messages;
- ii) respond to different literacy levels and abilities (low, medium and high); and
- iii) foster experiential learning through the use of different sensory modalities (visual, auditory and kinesthetic).

Curriculum and publication development strategy:

1. Legal research & edit from BMCLC Program to ensure accuracy of legal and referral information.
2. Teacher edit from Education Program and adult educators in the western region to ensure the content meets teaching needs.
3. Student/teacher curriculum pilot to ensure that CLE is pitched at correct level.

Key Findings:

- interdisciplinary collaboration facilitates best practice CLE training and resource development; and
- collaboration between legal and education professionals allowed for ongoing project problem solving and different audience needs to be explored through a wider interdisciplinary lens.

Legal Modules Developed:

1. Defining your role- difference between legal information and advice
2. The Australian Legal System
3. Police Rights
4. Driving and Road Rules
5. Car Accidents and Insurance
6. Contracts, debt and dealing with fines
7. Renting
8. Centrelink
9. Employment Law and Rights
10. Family Law
11. Family Violence
12. Child Protection



Professional Development Materials:

- 12 Modules with key basic messages, with additional module, “Your role as an information intermediary”
- Lawyers’ and project officer’s speakers notes for 12 Workshops
- 12 online PD Prezi Modules featuring key messages, Q/A, inspirational messages from industry experts, activities and referral pathway information activities
- 11-Streamlined *Learning Law in our Land* Nutshell Guides
- 11 Referral Pathway Guides
- activities and curriculum worksheets at varied learning levels and using visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning methods

Classroom Curriculum Pilot Materials:

- 13 lesson plans developed in line with the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF)
- 40+ interactive activity resources created

The classroom curriculum pilot project aimed to incorporate creative learning, which complements present teaching frameworks and guidelines in Australia. The ACSF framework provides a rich and detailed structure for adult educators to assess five core skills: learning, reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy.

PHASE 3: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP/ TRAINING



“Fantastic workshop, very much needed and should be extended to greater Melbourne/Victoria- hopefully, there will be more workshops.”

PD Participant

“Well resourced, highly professional and best PD I have ever attended.”

PD Participant

In July 2013, 18 adult educators from the Melbourne’s western metropolitan region participated in a three day professional development program.

Lawyers from the BMCLC and the *Learning Law in our Land* Project Officer delivered key legal and referral information on 12 topics.

The professional development program included interview recordings from industry experts and a range of classroom activities that could be introduced into participants’ own classrooms.

Adult educators were provided with streamlined curriculum guides (available in low, medium and high literacy levels) to be piloted in their own classrooms across the west.

Lesson plans, games and activities able to be used by teachers in their own classrooms were distributed and trialed during the professional development program. Development of these resources was informed by the ongoing feedback of participating teachers.

Some of the activities piloted in PD included:

- creating artistic murals
- role-plays
- photographing traffic signs
- reading electricity bills
- filling out rental condition reports
- playing board games



Participating adult educators and lawyers completed evaluation surveys and 100% positive feedback was received.

PHASE 4: CLASSROOM CURRICULUM PILOT

FOUR

Engage Adult learners with the law in their classrooms

“Thank you. I was very scared and worried the other day because I had accident. But I remember the fun we had in class so I got out my license and lucky a few days before I got good insurance.”

ESL Learner

How many classes participated?

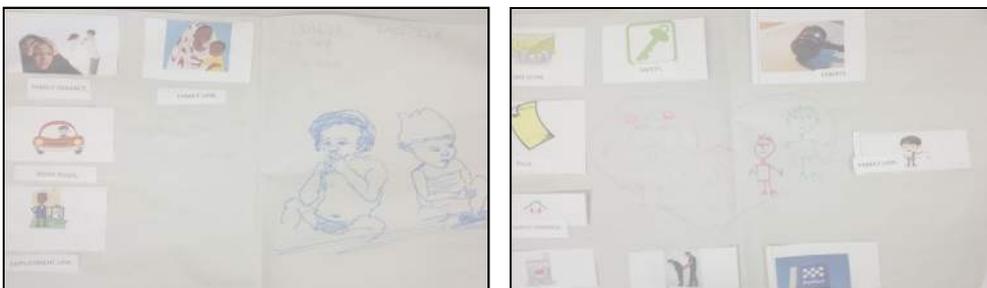
The *Learning Law in our Land* curriculum was piloted in 30 classes across the western metropolitan region.

How was the pilot project implemented?

1) *Introductory Class*

The introductory lesson began with the artistic mural activity, “How does the law affect our lives?” The activity encourages a story-based dialogue about how the law affects people’s everyday lives.

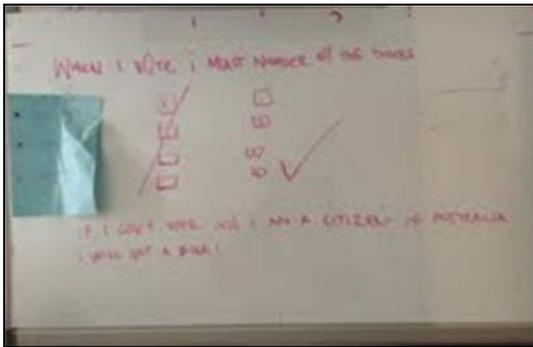
Next, a visual legal literacy survey was distributed to students. Community West collected the surveys and created a legal literacy report for participating classrooms. The legal literacy report helped inform which modules (lesson plans and activities) would be of most benefit for students to learn more about, allowing the delivery of targeted legal information and referral pathways.



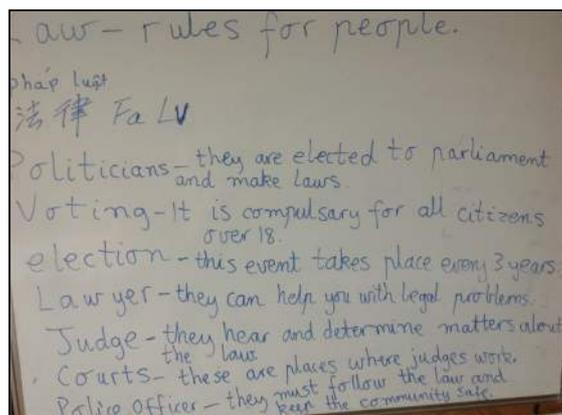
ii) Learning Journey

Teachers chose from a range of 13 lesson plans and 40+ activities designed for the curriculum pilot, based on the classroom legal literacy reports.

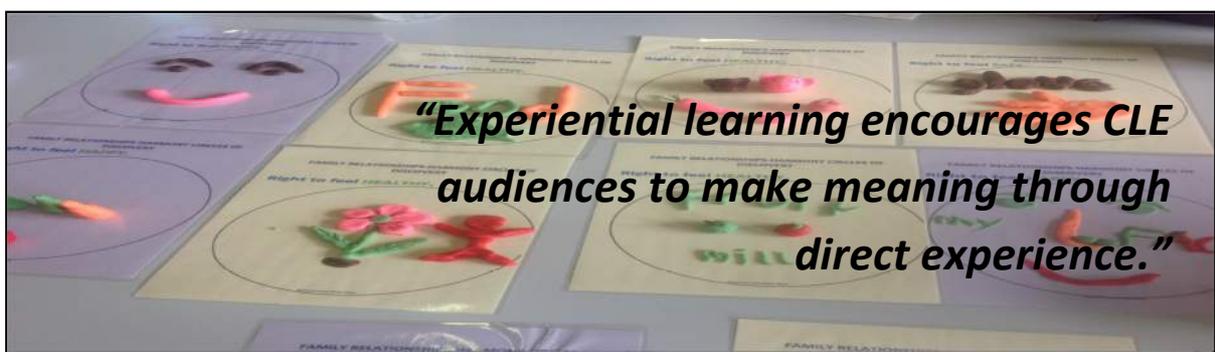
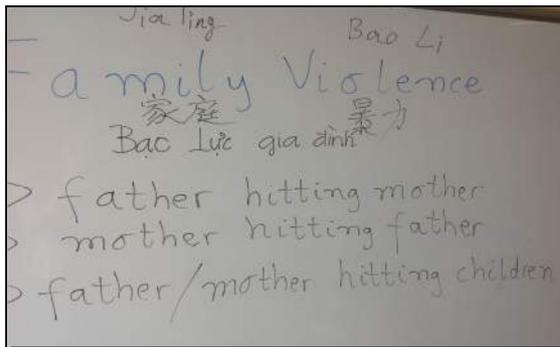
Time for a classroom election - "What does good citizenship and preferential voting mean?"



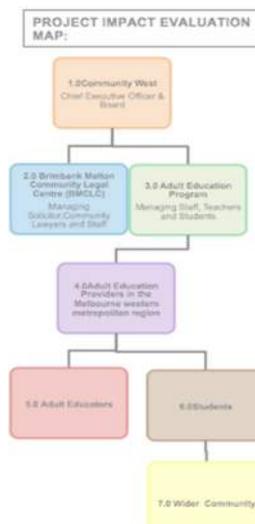
Court excursion and court role-plays:



Learning about Family Law, Family Violence and Child Protection: The right to feel safety, happiness and health in our relationships.



PHASE 5: PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION



5.1 Evaluation Methodology

Good project evaluation tells us more than participation numbers. The project evaluation was designed to pilot and make use of empowering research methods that:

- assess the social impact of the *Learning Law in our Land* project with merit and validity;
- build a strong evidence base;
- inform future directions; and
- ensure ongoing improvement.

The strategic evaluation plan fosters an organizational, community and family capacity building and impact approach to harness the personal voices and experiences of project participants as a central evaluative tool.

An impact evaluation of the project allows analysis that measures the net change in outcomes for partner organizations, adult educators, professional development facilitators and students that can be attributed to participation in the project, using the best and most appropriate methodology available.

Some of the guiding considerations that informed this evaluation strategy include:

- freedom to learn and communicate through different mediums (visual, auditory and kinesthetic communication and learning);
- overcoming the potential language barriers that may inhibit participants' understandings and voices;
- effective use of qualitative and quantitative data tools;
- conversational participant-orientated model for all participants; and
- self empowerment, observation and reflection.

The evaluation of this report aligns with Community West’s strong values of community and stakeholder engagement to work creatively and responsibly with our community. It is based on the need to reach, empower and capture the interactions and data linked to a wider audience engagement with community legal education information.

5.2 Establishing best practice quantitative data collection strategies

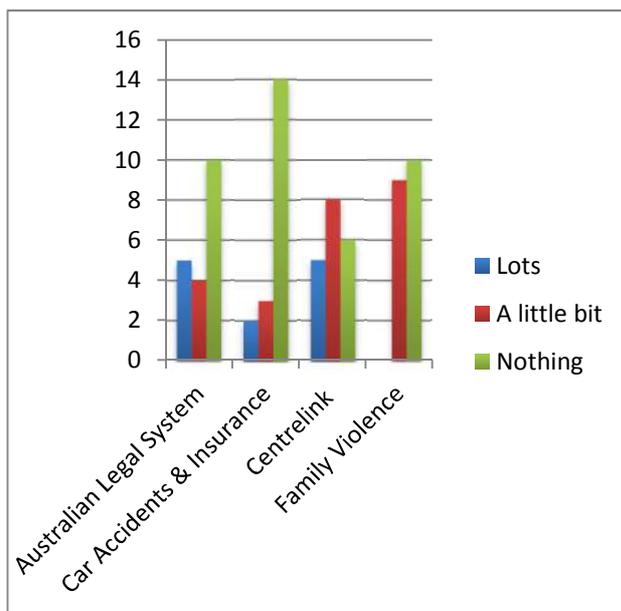
Aim: Obtain reliable quantitative data to capture the voices and experiences of high, medium and low literacy level curriculum pilot participants.

5.2.1 Strategy one: Evaluating pre and post-Pilot Visual Legal Literacy Surveys

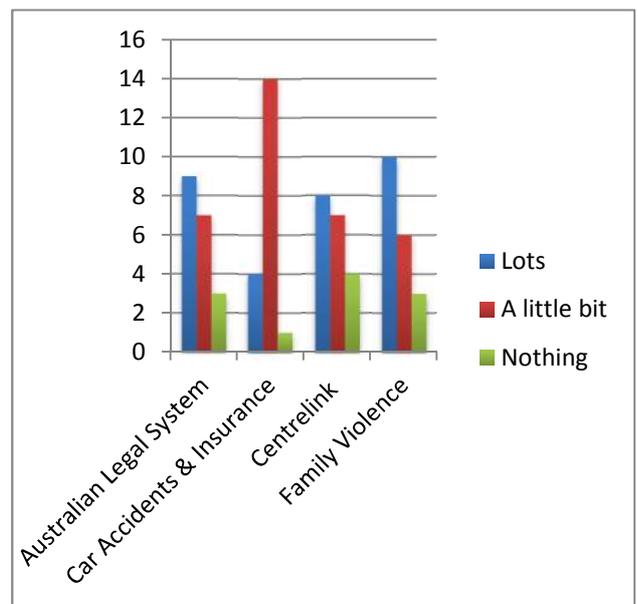
A visual legal literacy survey was distributed to a class of 19 students before and after the curriculum pilot. The sample group was categorized as a high literacy group.

Findings:

Graph 1: Pre-Curriculum Pilot:



Graph 2: Post-Curriculum Pilot:



The visual survey asked students if they knew lots, a little bit or nothing about four modules. The vast majority of students identified as knowing nothing or little about the topics noted in Graphs 1. However, upon completion of the curriculum pilot, a vast majority of students identified themselves with knowing lots or a little bit about the legal topics (Graph 2).

5.2.2 Strategy two: Evaluating understanding and impact by ‘Hanging the Classroom Line’

“Legal Literacy Reports and surveys administered inform ongoing project participant needs.” Steering Committee Observation

“The surveys create a classroom dialogue. They document quantifiable legal literacy improvement in a fun and user friendly manner.” English Teacher

A group of 11 students categorized as either low or medium English literacy levels found it difficult to complete the visual surveys. An alternative activity was then trialed to capture their learning experience and voices in a quantitative format.

2.2-Hanging the classroom learning line

Context:
This evaluation activity asks students to self reflect on their classroom learning, and to make a choice and explain that choice. Additionally this activity can be tailored easily for high, medium and low literacy level groups.

- Students are given a red, green and orange peg and piece of paper to draw a facial expression.
 - green= yes
 - orange= maybe
 - red=no
- When students are asked a question about their learning they will be instructed to respond by drawing a facial expression and pegging it onto the classroom line.
- A photo of the classroom line can be taken or students might like to create a data tally from the evaluation activity.

- Have you learnt anything new about the law?
- Have you learnt a new word?
- Do you know where to get help if you have a problem?
- Does learning about this new information make you feel happy and confident?
- Have you spoken to your family about what you have learnt?



The class that completed the activity was taught the following modules over 10 lessons:

- The Australian Legal System
- Contracts
- Driving and Road Rules
- Car Accidents and Insurance

Upon completion of the curriculum pilot students were asked three questions:

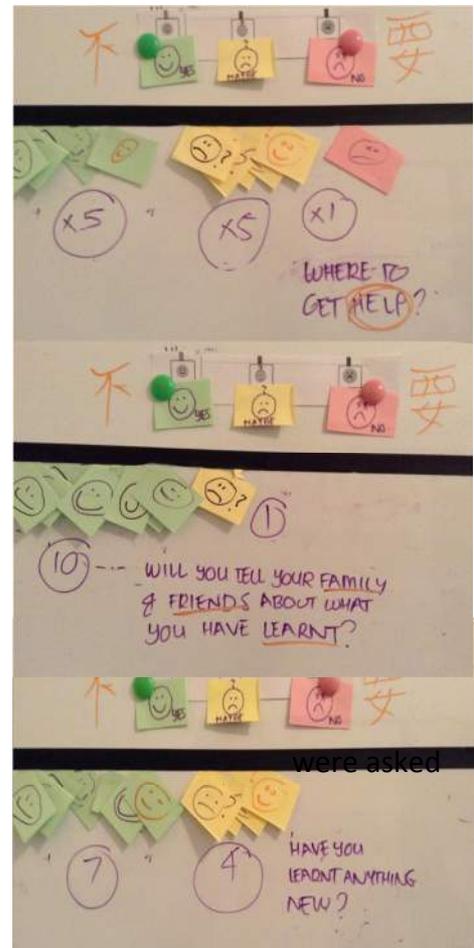
- do you know where to get legal help?
- have you learnt something new?
- will or have you told your family and friends?

In response to these questions they were asked to hang a happy (yes), unsure (maybe) or sad face (no) on their classroom line.

The majority of students responded with happy faces in the 10 classes in which this participatory evaluation strategy was used.

“Great activity to get feedback from my low literacy level learners who often don’t get an opportunity to provide feedback in traditional evaluation- i.e. surveys.”

ESL Teacher



5.2.3 Strategy Three: Granular Graphs- Self Evaluation through music and movement

A small group of students with very limited English proficiency learnt two modules over four weeks: Police Rights and Car Accidents.

Appendix 2: Granular Graphs

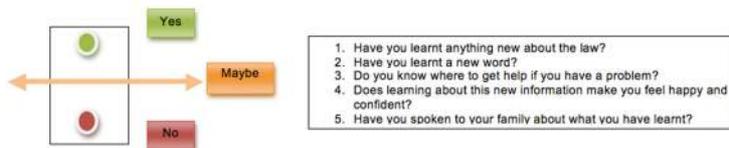
2.1- Self Evaluation through music and movement

Context:

This evaluation activity asks students to self reflect on their classroom learning, and to make a choice and explain that choice. Additionally this activity can be tailored easily for high, medium and low literacy level groups.

The room is divided in half with masking tape- on each end there is a choice (posters or different music can be used to differentiate each side).

1. To set up the activity the teacher asks a question and offers choices.
2. Students move to the corner of their choice.
3. Students find a partner in their corner and describe the reasons for their choice in their group.
4. Each group has a spokesperson that presents a brief summary of their choice.



Students were asked if they liked what they had learnt and to write down a help service if they remembered any in particular.

Students could respond by moving towards either (a) happy music if they respond yes to a question, or (b) move past the line towards music that has a slow beat if they wanted to respond no. One group in the classroom plotted the position of their peers, presented a referral pathway and drew up a tally.

5.2.3 Strategy Four: Evaluating the value of teachers as information intermediaries through recorded referrals and brochure information logbook

- ✓ 40+ referrals made by teachers to enquiring students
- ✓ 2,010 brochures and information resources distributed

Refer to Appendix 5 for inventory of CLE materials, referral pathways and information distributed to students.

Key Findings:

- different evaluation methodologies, techniques and activities can be used to accurately reflect experiences of all community legal education audiences; and
- referral pathways and distribution of legal information served as a formidable tool to provide quantitative data and from which to draw qualitative inference (i.e. participating students who request referral pathway help are now better linked to support services through their teacher who acts as an information intermediary).

5.3 Establishing best practice qualitative data collection strategies

Aim: Obtain reliable quantitative data to capture the experiences, feelings, opinions and feedback from curriculum pilot participants.

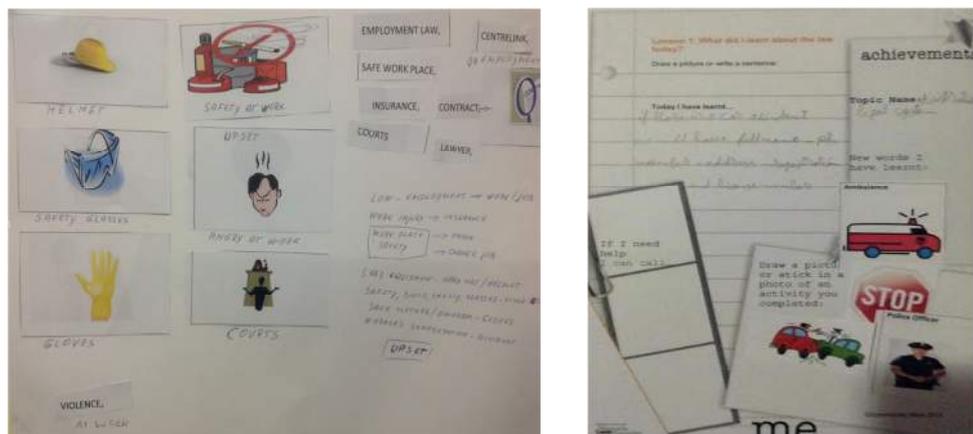
5.3.1 Using lesson scrapbooks and classroom words work to document the learning journey of students and subtle improvements in legal literacy

The students' work below details information about the Australian Legal System, new words and referral pathway services and numbers. Alex's comprehension can be deduced through his likening of the Australian legal system to that of the Czech Republic.

“Alex has expressed to his teacher that he enjoys learning about the law. In particular, there is a memory game that links words with pictures and definitions that he always requests to play. He and another classmate have cleverly turned the activity into a game of snap. In the beginning they didn't know how to link the cards, but they can now do so expediently, and they can also coherently articulate the different roles of people who work in the Australian legal system.”



“Classroom observation played a pivotal role in assessing subtle improvements in legal literacy.”



5.3.2 A teacher's account and observations

"The students appreciated being given a survey to declare what they liked to learn about the law. They also enjoyed drawing images of a child, young person, family and people working. They were able to match legal words to these images. They could discuss and then paste the correct words.

Prior to teaching the Australian Legal System module, students wrote the word Law on the board in Chinese and Vietnamese. They were able to name different types of law or institutions such as driving law, VicRoads. After that, they matched the words with the pictures of the playing. Finally, the students did the election storyboard and were able to take key messages from that activity such as eligibility, the election date and enrolment. This was a big unit that needed to be completed over to successive lessons. About six students asked me for help service information.

Prior to teaching the Centrelink module, I wrote down student's responses to questions about Centrelink they were able to tell me about attending appointments, using the phone and acquiring their health care cards from Centrelink. They were experts in Centrelink and were able to answer the questions to the quiz quite quickly. They enjoyed watching the short video about Centrelink and were able to ask questions. When they did the Centrelink word search they loved the word 'exactly' and use it sometimes when speaking. Finally, when filling out the Centrelink form the teacher guided the class through filling out this extensive form.

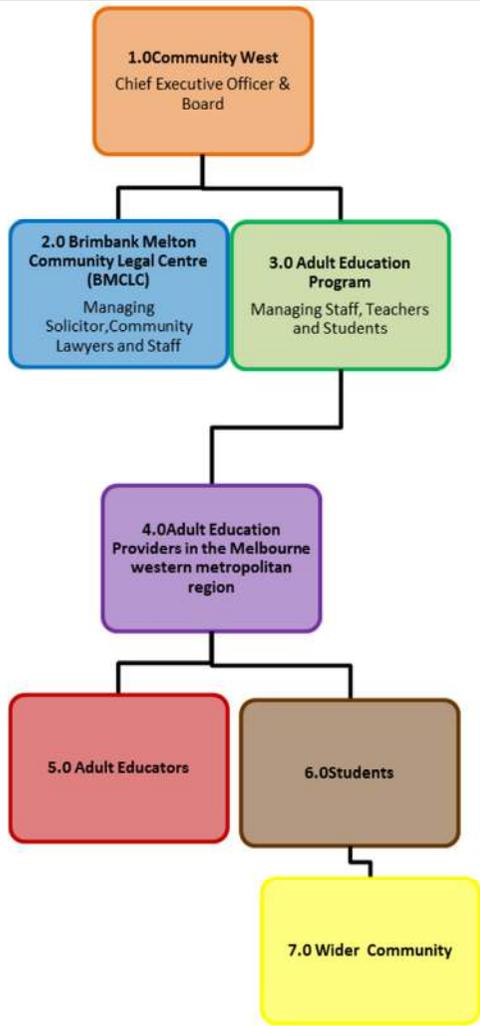
Prior to teaching the Family Violence module, students wrote the word family violence on the board in Chinese and Vietnamese. The students were able to verbalise examples of family violence by mentioning how husbands hit their wives when they are drunk. After that, students engaged in using play dough to create really artistic harmony circles and they loved this activity- could not get them away from the play dough. Finally, the students watched the family violence video and picked up the key messages of phoning the police and getting an intervention order."

Key Findings:

- **teachers as information intermediaries, who have built a rapport with adult learners, can use their expertise and training to facilitate evaluation and thorough qualitative observation;**
- **students were proud and showed a real eagerness to have photos of their work be taken; and**
- **there is a resolute power in delivering CLE to classrooms where students are of the same culturally origin. Students exhibited resilience as they worked together to understand words, share their stories and translate information.**

5.4

COMMUNITY IMPACT EVALUATION MAP



- 1.0 Community West**
- 1.1 Develop innovative programs in the western metropolitan region to improve access to legal information and support services.
 - 1.2 Systemic capacity building through joint collaborations and partnerships.
 - 1.3. Improve connections between the education and legal sectors in the western metropolitan region.
 - 1.4 Community empowerment.

- 2.0 Brimbank Melton Community Legal Centre (BMCLC)**
- 2.1 Promote, protect and realise the right to access to justice for disadvantaged and marginalised individuals.
 - 2.2 Support Community Organisations to deliver early intervention, community legal education.
 - 2.3 Improve availability and dissemination of legal information and referral pathways for community organisations and members in the west

- 3.0 Adult Education Program**
- 3.1 Promote self empowerment through improved literacy and numeracy skills.
 - 3.2 Provision of training for teachers to deliver targeted legal and referral pathway information to students.
 - 3.3 Increase knowledge and skills of students to empower them to confidently engage in society.
 - 3.4 Improve and enhance adult education resources and curriculum about the law for students with low, medium and high literacy requirements.

- 4.0 Adult Education Providers in the Melbourne western metropolitan region**
- 4.1 Increase capacity to offer professional development opportunities for staff.
 - 4.2 Improve connections between educators and legal services.
 - 4.3 Improve knowledge and referral pathway resources and information available to students.

- 5.0 Adult Educators**
- 5.1 Improve capacity and knowledge for teachers to incorporate information about legal rights and responsibilities and services available for accessing legal help into their teaching programs and courses.
 - 5.2 Increase legal knowledge.
 - 5.3 Improve access to Community Legal education materials and curriculum-creative learning activities.

- 6.0 Students**
- 6.1. Self empowerment.
 - 6.2 Increase knowledge and understanding of the law.
 - 6.3 Increased awareness of legal help services and pathways.
 - 6.4 Exposure to experiential and creative learning activities.

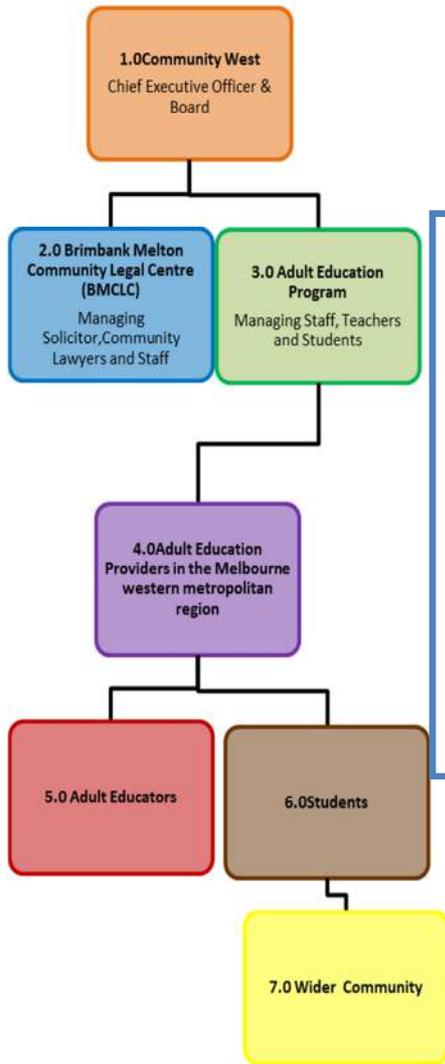
- 7.0 Wider Community**
- 7.1. Increase discussion and sharing of legal information and referral pathways within CALD communities, the education sector and families.
 - 7.2 Capacity building amidst specialist legal services, community legal services and Victoria Legal Aid in the western metropolitan region.
 - 7.3 Improve knowledge and referral pathway resources and information available to workers and students in the western metropolitan region.
 - 7.4. Increase awareness of legal rights, responsibilities and obligations.

Project Impact Evaluation: Observations and Reflections



Rachna Muddagouni, Chief Executive Officer, Community West

"Our Adult Education program focuses on developing the life skills and learning of our adult learners through a facilitated and participatory approach. This project has enhanced and supported our trainers to introduce new concepts of law and how to navigate the legal system based on core adult learning principles."



Stephanie Tonkin, Managing Lawyer, BMCLC

"The project pioneers an early interventionist strategy which captures a new and broader community audience- it has facilitated the wider dissemination of available community legal education materials (in excess of 2000 referral pathway brochures) and empowered people with information about basic fundamental rights and responsibilities."

Branka Stevanovic, Education Manager, Community West

On a daily basis the teachers are facing many questions that they may or may not answer or are in a dilemma: Should I get involved, should I help, who can help and how can we as teachers help. The students bring their bills, fines, letters, Centrelink forms to the class and seek support from the teachers.

Some teachers are not equipped with the proper knowledge of how much information they can provide and if the information is valid.

These Project gave teachers an insight of the paths they can explore and how to manage it.

Adult Educator feedback following Professional Development workshops

- Very common and relevant topics
- More time for discussion- everybody was really interested
- Please continue to provide creative activities- e.g. play dough and mural artwork
- Good opportunity to learn how to provide legal information for different learning styles
- Will incorporate information into a new program we are teaching
- Well resourced, highly professional and a great sense of humour
- Fantastic workshop, very much needed and should be extended to greater Melbourne/Victoria- hopefully, there will be more workshops



Suresh McKenzie, Adult Educator, Community West

"My class loved the *Learning Law in our Land* program. It provided them with the opportunity to be artistic, to do role-plays and word searches. They are now legal novices thanks to the program – we have really engaged in a collaborative learning experience and my students now know where they can get legal information and help."



Community West Students

"I love learning about things that can go wrong and how I can call Legal Aid or a Community Legal Centre for help. Learning this at school gives me the opportunity to help my community."

"We have fun in class learning about court and elections. I like to learn about filling out forms."

"I like to tell my friends about where they can get help."

Rob Hulls, RMIT Director of the Centre for Innovative Justice and former Attorney General of Victoria

"Community legal education is crucial to empower people. If people don't know about their legal rights they feel disenfranchised and disempowered. So community legal education, talking about people's legal rights at a grass roots level, is absolutely crucial to empower people."

"For people to be taking on a teaching role particularly in the legal and 'democracy' field is a really good thing to be doing because if you take away people's legal rights, if you take away their knowledge about how our democratic system works, you're really making them second class citizens. Knowledge is power and lack of knowledge makes people powerless. It's important that people do know about our system. It's important that teachers get out there and impart knowledge about democracy, about legal rights to as many people as possible. What teachers are doing in passing on this knowledge is very very valuable for our democracy."



grant from
**Victoria
Foundation**

5. Recommendations & Findings

- Legal services and community education should not exist in a vacuum. There are innovative multidisciplinary strategies and partnerships that can be forged to capture new community audiences.
- To be successful, CLE strategies should focus on and be developed in consultation with these audiences (non-legal professionals).
- Targeted CLE equips non-legal professionals with the ability to better-identify an event as a legal need and knowledge of how address the legal need through specific referral pathway services.
- CLE professional development training for non-legal professionals can be successfully used to empower them to act as information and referral pathway intermediaries.
- Professional development and mentorship of non-legal professionals as information intermediaries can facilitate wider and early intervention distribution of CLE resources and legal information brochures.
- There is a need to demystify and simplify legal information for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- The provision of streamlined and plain English curriculum and training empowers teachers to incorporate information about the Australian legal system, legal rights and responsibilities and referral pathways into their teaching programs and courses.
- Classrooms provide a perfect platform to improve legal literacy and access to justice.

Conclusion

The positive reception of *Learning Law in our Land* by teachers, students, lawyers and industry experts reinforces the potential that community legal education has to facilitate systemic and efficient capacity building.

Each classroom session and professional development workshop has the potential to act as a positive intervention, and to help people better understand their rights and duties, as well as where they can turn to or direct others for support.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1:

ESTABLISHED PROJECT MILESTONES:

1	Develop project plan	Detailed project plan with clear actions/tasks and timelines for each phase of the project.
2	Establish reference group	Establish Reference Group of eight members (legal and education professionals empanelled).
3	Literature Review	Literature review and survey of existing adult education modules about the Australian legal system, rights and responsibilities and referral pathways.
4	Identify needs of teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups undertaken with teachers and students from Community West – pilot phase. • Focus groups undertaken with teachers and students with external education providers in the west– curriculum delivered in class phase.
5	Development of modules	Professional development modules and curriculum materials developed in collaboration with Victoria University.
6	Professional development program	Professional development modules developed in collaboration with Community West Education team.
7	Community legal education delivered to adult learners	Curriculum and teaching materials trialled across participating sites.
8	Participatory evaluation	Evaluation of PD program and teaching resources across all sites.
9	Assessment and review of resources based on evaluation findings.	Final version of all resources settled and ready for dissemination.
10	Publication and dissemination	<p>Accessible online distribution system in place for dissemination of project outputs.</p> <p>Publicity strategy developed and implemented.</p>
11	Final Report and acquittal	Final project report.

Appendix 2:

Survey distributed to Adult ESL Students



Survey: Learning about the law

Instructions:

For each question please shade the face that you think gives the best answer.

1. Do you know anything about the Australian legal system and courts?



2. Do you know anything about the police and your rights?



3. Do you know anything about driving laws and road rules?



4. Do you know anything about car accidents?



5. Do you know anything about insurance?



6. Do you know anything about contracts?



7. Do you know anything about buying a car?



8. Do you know anything about renting and buying a house?



9. Do you know anything about Centrelink?



10. Do you know anything about your employment rights ?



11. Do you know anything about dealing with fines and debt matters?



12. Are you confident to deal with possible legal issues and problems?



13. Do you want to learn more about the law and where to go to fix your legal problems?



14. Do you believe your teachers can help you learn more about the law?



Tell us something about you. Are you....

Under 18

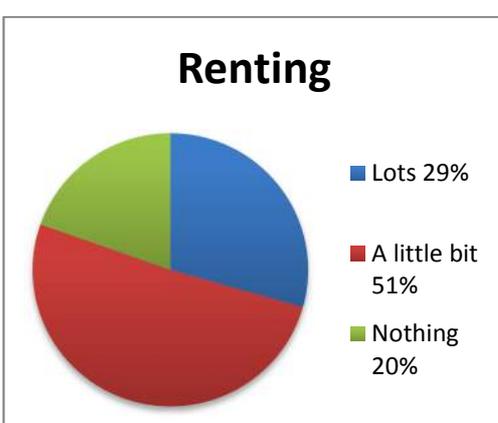
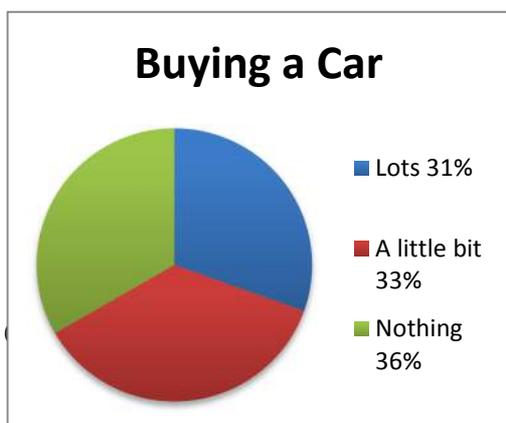
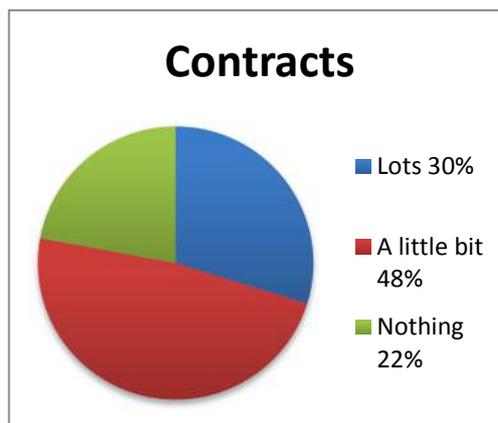
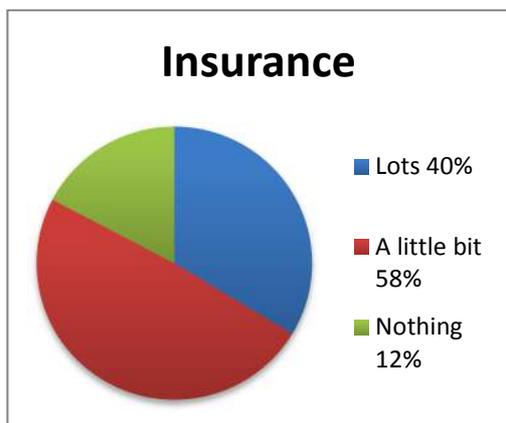
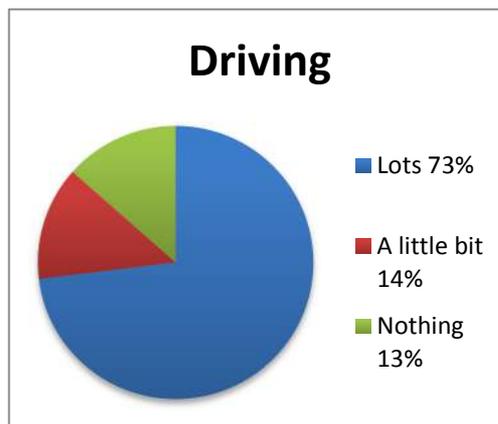
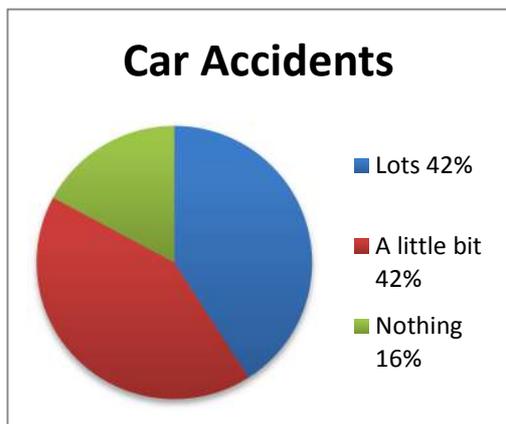
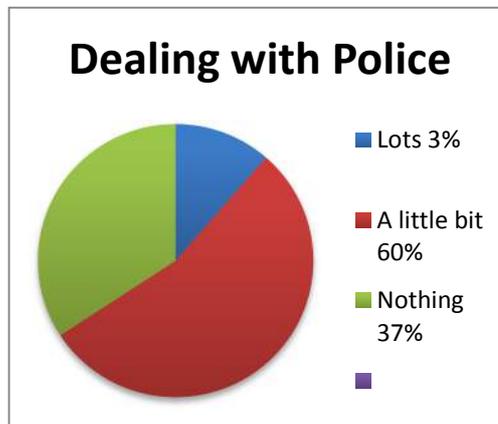
18-34 Male

35-49 Female

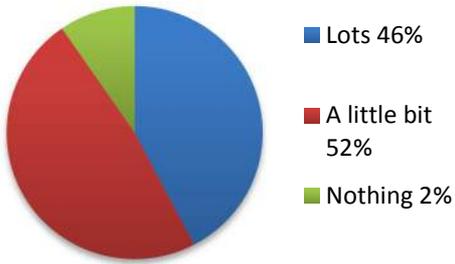
50-64

Appendix 3:

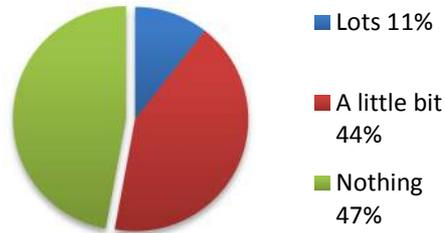
Visual Legal Literacy Survey Results: Common information gaps identified from the student visual legal literacy surveys distributed to adult learners in January 2013.



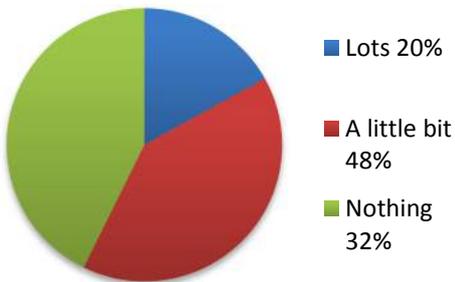
Centrelink



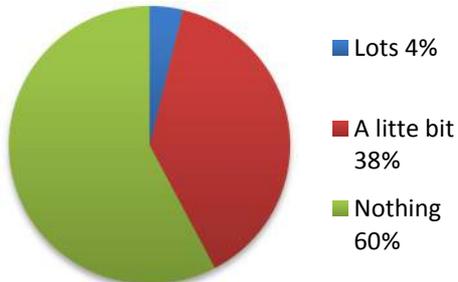
Employment Rights



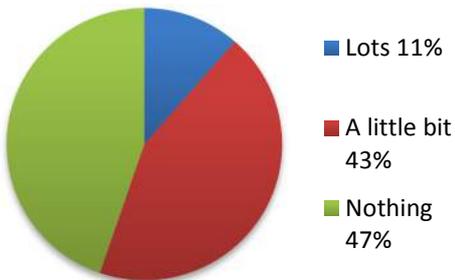
Fines & Debt



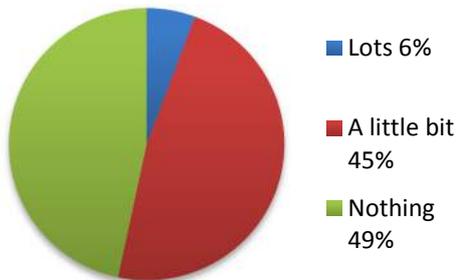
Family Law



Family Violence

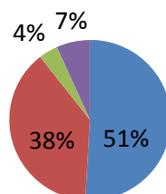


Child Protection



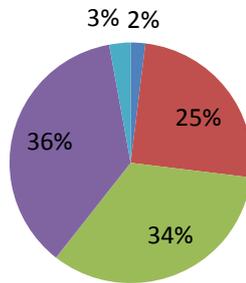
Do you want to learn more about where you can get legal help?

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree



Confidence to deal with legal issues and problems

■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Not Answered



Appendix 4:

4.1 Common information gaps identified from teachers focus groups January 2013:

1. Do you believe that teaching your students about the basic Australian Legal system, issues and help services will better empower them to deal with legal issues?

- Yes, we often have students share stories about legal problems that they are experiencing. For example, last week I had a class where a lady was asking me about driving and road rules.
 - A lot of my students don't know where to go to get help. I often find that this a great barrier students face when they receive fines and cant pay them.
- I commonly hear students talk in the class about phone bills and contracts.
- Some of the women in my class talk about parenting issues- a lot of them don't know that you shouldn't smack your children.
- Here and there the issue of family violence and divorce gets raised in my class- I know very little about this so feel awkward addressing such questions.

2. Do you believe that engaging in a professional development program and being provided with relevant curriculum will help you to provide basic legal education to your students?

- We need more information that we can teach in our classrooms. But I find that as a teacher I don't get time to do research and find appropriate resources to use and share with my students.
- Lots of my students enjoy learning and discussing real life matters- they like engaging in tasks such as role-plays, games etc.

3. Which legal issues do you specifically think are important to your students?

- Car Accidents;
- Insurance;
- Family violence; and
- How to contact a lawyer and get free legal help?
- Centrelink
- How to fill out forms?

4. What are some of the challenges that you envisage in delivering community legal education curriculum to your students?

- Time
- Low literacy levels

- Knowing how to deal sensitively with issues if students disclose any information to me
- Knowing what kind of information to provide- I don't want to be giving information, which I'm not qualified to give.
- I want to know who, where and how I can refer my students to help services- I don't want to send them on a wild goose chase.

5. What are your professional development needs as teachers?

- Discussion, activities and ongoing support after PD
- Resources and activities
- Brochures and legal information
- Information in different languages to distribute to students.

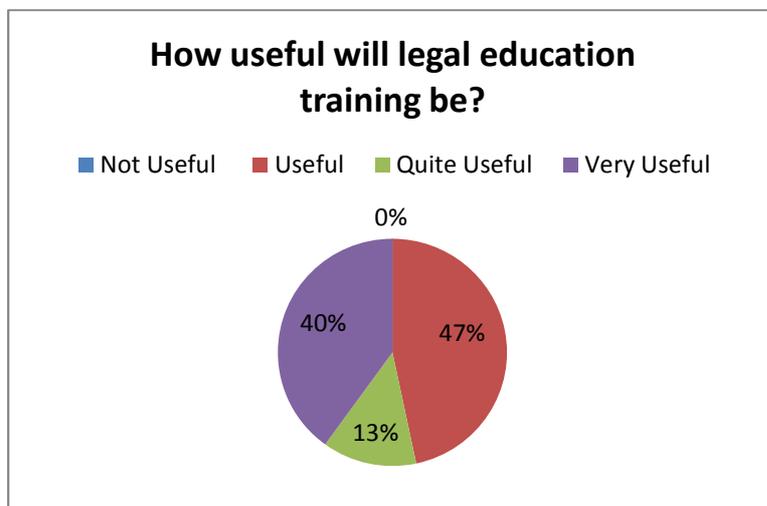
6. What are some of the tools that you believe will help you to successfully develop skills and deliver community legal education to adult learners?

- Basic information
- Presentations
- Activities
- Handouts
- Games
- Brochures
- Speakers notes

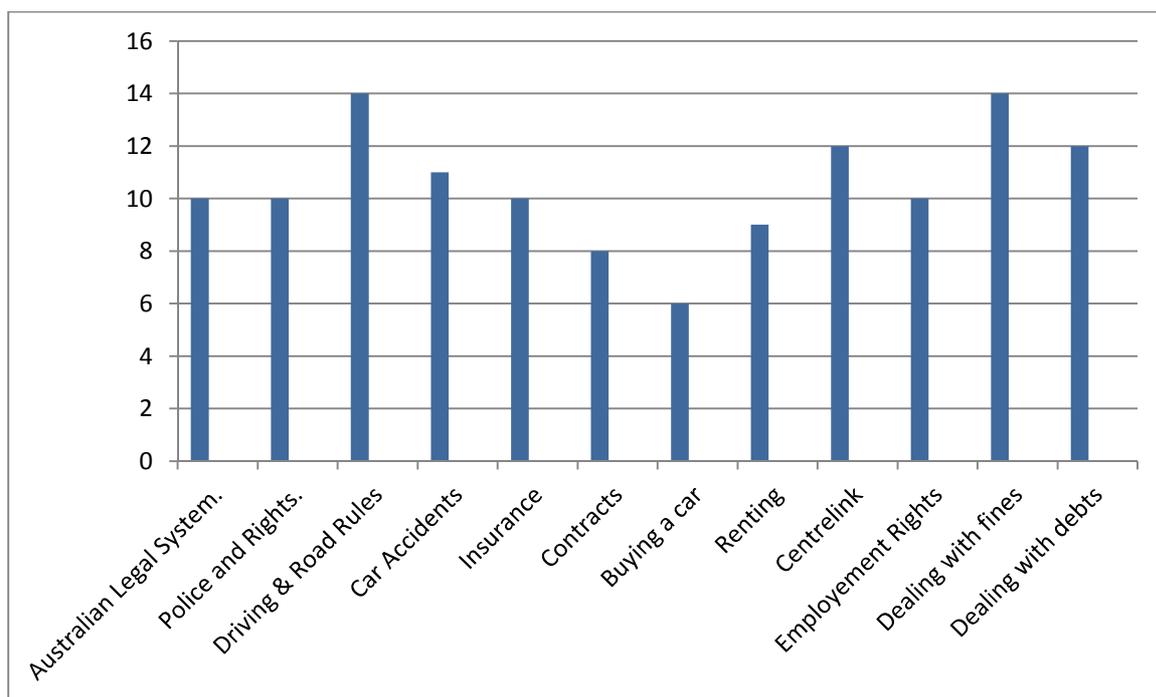
4.2 Teachers' Professional Development Needs Survey:

Staff gave very positive feedback to the idea of engaging in professional development to learn more about the law and empower vulnerable adult learners with critical life skills.

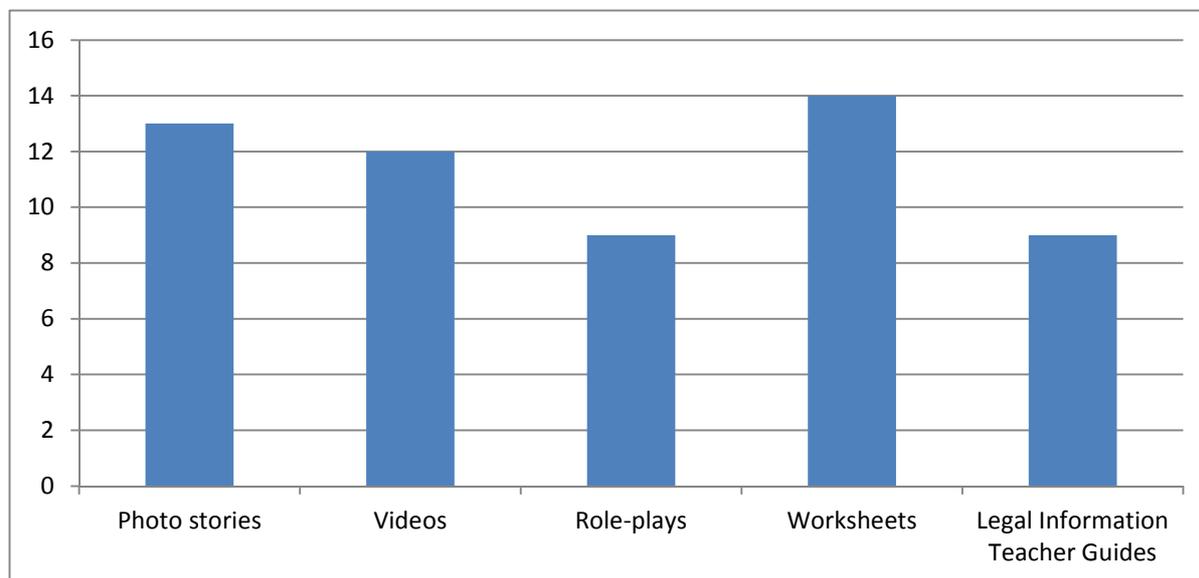
Subsequently, 15 teachers completed a survey in January 2013 about the potential benefits of participating in professional legal education development, the perceived legal needs of students and useful tools to impart basic legal information.



Legal Problems about which teachers believed students need to learn more:



Useful Resources and Tools for Teachers:



Appendix 5:

***Learning Law in our Land* Legal Information Distribution Inventory**

Brochures, Information and resources distributed: PD Participants July 2013 (PD CLE Resources Distributed)

Brochures:	Numbers:
Victoria Law Foundation- 'Need legal help?'	60
Victoria Law Foundation- 'Neighbors, the law and you '	
Victoria Law Foundation-Melbourne's legal precinct Excursion	
Victoria Legal Aid 'What's the Law? 'Australian Law for New Arrivals	20
Victoria Legal Aid -Dealing with door to door sales	15
Victoria Legal Aid –Help Cards -Arabic -Burmese -Croatian -Dari -Farsi -English -Greek -Italian -Khmer -Korean -Chinese (traditional and simplified) -Macedonian -Nuer -Oromo -Serbian -Thai -Tamil	200
Victoria Legal Aid-Police Powers your rights in Victoria	40
Victoria Legal Aid-Your day in Court	40
Victoria Legal Aid- After you have separated: making arrangements about the children. Various languages -	40
Victoria Legal Aid- Separation and Divorce Various languages	60
Victoria Legal Aid How to respond to a family violence intervention order	30
Victoria Legal Aid Safe at Home- How to get a family law violence intervention order.	60

Various Languages	
Victoria Legal Aid- You and Family Law	40
Victoria Legal Aid- Debt Problems: the law, your options	40
Money Smart: You can Complain	20
Money Smart: Dealing with debt Various languages	20
Money Smart: Debt,paying bills Various languages	20
Money Help: Fact Sheet – what is money help?	20
Salvation Army- Social Housing Service Brochure	15
Jobwatch- Employment Contracts (fact sheet)	15
Energy and Water Ombudsman- High Water Bills(information for residential customers)	15
Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman- do you have a problem with your telephone or internet company	15
Transport Accident Commission – about the TAC	10
Family Relationship Centre-Helping families build better relationship	40
Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission- information on discrimination factsheet	35
Consumer Affairs Victoria: -Contracts Easy English Factsheet -Phone sales Easy English Factsheet -Refunds Easy English Factsheet -Shopping tips Easy English Factsheet -Scams Easy English Factsheets	X 20
Court network- Going to Court Brochure	30
Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS)- How to resolve a dispute? Various languages	40
Financial Ombudsman Service(FOS)- A guide for dealing with financial difficulty	20
City West Water – Understanding your Electricity Bill	20

Classroom Pilot Project Brochures and Information resources distributed.

Brochures:	Numbers:
Victoria Law Foundation- ‘Need legal help?’	140
Victoria Law Foundation- ‘Neighbors, the law and you ‘	140
Victoria Law Foundation- ‘Parking the law and you’	140
Victoria Legal Aid- Card	280
Victoria Legal Aid- Fines the Law your Options	80
Brimbank Melton Community Legal Centre Card	100
Victoria Legal Aid-Your day in Court	140

Victoria Legal Aid-Police Powers	20
Victoria Legal Aid- Disagree with a Centrelink Decision	120
Victoria Legal Aid- Debt Problems, the law your options	120
Victoria Legal Aid- Dealing with fines- the law your options	120
Money Help: Fact Sheet – what is money help?	80
Family Relationships Centre	60
City West Water – Understanding your Electricity Bill	120
Energy and Water Ombudsman- High Water Bills(information for residential customers)	60
Consumer Affairs Victoria-Contracts Easy English	80
Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman- do you have a problem with your telephone or internet company	100
Money Smart: You can Complaint	80
Victoria Legal Aid Safe at Home- How to get a family law violence intervention order. Various Languages	120