

PoliceLife

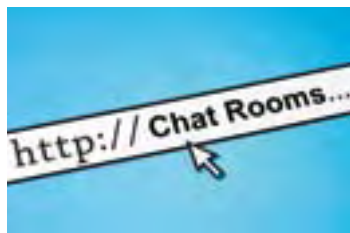
YOUTH EDITION

VICTORIA'S FUTURE

How police are working
with young people.



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FROM THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER



This special edition of *Police Life* focuses on youth in our community and highlights some of the issues facing young people.

In a techno era where school children carry mobile phones, have personal computers in their bedrooms and ipods jammed in their ears, we are witnessing a generation of white-noisers living among us. These kids are tech-savvy, can communicate with each other instantly and at any time of the day or night, and have even invented their own language.

The challenge for police trying to engage them is to keep it 'real'. And relevant. Victoria Police is blogging, tweeting and facebooking with young people to educate and help prepare them for a safe and happy life.

Unfortunately, young people are over-represented in crime statistics – as offenders and victims. Alcohol-fuelled violence, drugs, road trauma and online crime are very real problems in our society.

In this edition of *Police Life*, the spotlight is on these topical issues with victims, families and police sharing their experiences and speaking candidly about lessons learned.

With Schoolies Week fast approaching, I urge parents and teachers to encourage teenagers to read these stories and promote discussion on these subjects.

Together we can, and will make a difference.

SIMON OVERLAND, APM

INBOX

LETTERS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC CAN BE SUBMITTED FOR PUBLICATION AND PREFERENCE WILL BE GIVEN TO LETTERS OF LESS THAN 150 WORDS. NAMES, ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS MUST BE INCLUDED. LETTERS MAY BE EDITED BY *POLICE LIFE*. ONLY THE NAME AND SUBURB WILL BE PUBLISHED, UNLESS THE WRITER REQUESTS OTHERWISE. SUBMIT LETTERS TO: policelife-mgr@police.vic.gov.au OR INBOX, *POLICE LIFE*, PO BOX 415, MELBOURNE, VICTORIA, 3005.



BECOME A FAN
OF *POLICE LIFE*
ON FACEBOOK.

ACADEMY'S APT PUPILS

A note to thank the Victoria Police Academy staff for a splendid afternoon at a recent Graduation Parade.

We thought the presentation by the graduates says much about the quality of the teachers and the commitment of the students.

In our case we have noticed the development of our young friend throughout the training period and his increased knowledge of himself and his team.

We feel sure that those who we saw yesterday will benefit from this 20-week experience and will remember it as a life-changing adventure.

As former teachers in this state, we often shared challenges of all kinds with communities around the state. It is exciting for us now, older persons, to see the beginnings of a vital relationship between students and members of our Victorian community.

MR AND MRS KIDD,
ALTONA

Editor's note: Experience a day with police recruits. See story on page 12.

FAMILY SUPPORT

Our organisation supports women and children in the Central Highlands region who have experienced family violence.

In providing this service we have frequent contact with regional police, in particular the Ballarat Family Violence Unit.

We wish to commend the unit as an outstanding example of effective policing.

Our clients have commented that they feel more confident contacting the police when they experience family violence because they feel police at the Family Violence Unit understand the dynamics of family violence, will not judge them and will support them to be safe.

Our staff have found the unit to be accessible and collaborative in their approach to working with family violence services to make victims of family violence safe.

LYNDEN BAXTER, WOMEN'S
RESOURCE INFORMATION
AND SUPPORT CENTRE

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COVER: YOUNG ONES

Police Life looks at the issues facing today's young people.

POSTER: SHOW TIME

Police take time out with children at this year's Royal Melbourne Show. Photograph: Shane Bell.



MAKING NEWS

FOR THE LATEST POLICE NEWS VISIT
WWW.VICPOLICENEWS.COM.AU

SCHOOL'S OUT

.01

POLICE ARE WORKING TO ENSURE SCHOOLIES CELEBRATIONS GO OFF WITHOUT A HITCH.

EDITORIAL **MARK TESORIERO**
PHOTOGRAPHY **SHANE BELL**

SCHOOLIES WEEK

.01 Sen Sgt Hardiman (left) joined other police and representatives from across Australia at the National School Leavers Conference in Lorne.

You have just finished your last Year 12 exam and there is only one more thing to do – party.

With about 70,000 teenagers congregating at popular beachside towns each November, Schoolies Week can be one of the most exciting times in a young person's life.

But unfortunately for some, it can be their worst.

Schoolies Week celebrations can be marred by instances of violence, excessive drinking and even tragedy.

An array of groups including police, government, accommodation providers, residents and high school students have come together ahead of this year's event to help ensure students remain safe.

The National School Leavers Conference, held in Lorne on Victoria's Surf Coast from 2 to 4 September, is in its fifth year of operation.

Participants heard about different Schoolies Week celebrations held across Australia during the conference.

The Victoria Police Youth Affairs Office's Senior Sergeant Tim Hardiman said the conference generated valuable discussion about national issues affecting Schoolies Week.

"We were able to share information and learn from each other's experiences so that we can make schoolies a safe environment for young people," he said.

"Each state is unique and we were able to hear from representatives from all popular areas.

"There are always good ideas generated from the conference and you get an idea of what works well and how governments in different areas are approaching the issue."

Victoria Police, which was part of the Conference Working Group, conducted an exercise on the conference's second day.

With Schoolies Week growing significantly on a national scale in the past few years, Sen Sgt Hardiman said it was essential that safety remained the key focus.

"It's not only young Victorians that are going to Queensland, but young people from other states are coming here and heading off to other schoolies destinations around the country," he said.

"We want to make sure that they are well-informed and educated about the safe way to celebrate." ✕

"With Schoolies Week growing significantly on a national scale in the past few years, Sen Sgt Hardiman said it was essential that safety remained the key focus."

VOXPOP

WHAT SAFETY ISSUE CONCERNS YOU MOST?



MATTHEW FITZPATRICK, 15

WERRIBEE

I am most concerned about assaults. It's probably my biggest fear.



REBECCA PULCINI, 16

WERRIBEE

Paedophiles concern me, so do rowdy people and strangers.



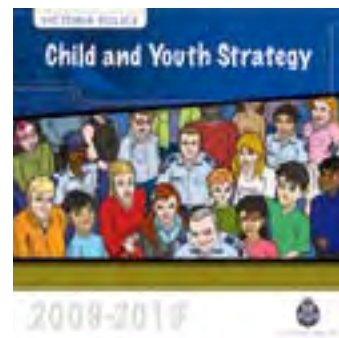
IDIL AHMED, 16

MILL PARK

I worry about being in a dangerous neighbourhood. Being a young girl, I especially worry about walking home alone and strangers.

YOUTHSTRATEGY

PLANNING FOR VICTORIA'S FUTURE



A STRATEGY HAS BEEN CREATED TO PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK TO IDENTIFY, DEVELOP AND APPLY ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE VICTORIA POLICE'S INTERACTION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE.

Children and young people are significantly over-represented in Victoria's crime statistics.

In 2007, young people accounted for more than 47 per cent of offenders processed for criminal offences, and more than 28 per cent of fatalities on Victoria's roads.

In April, Victoria Police launched the *Child and Youth Strategy* 2009–2013 to increase positive relationships between police and young people.

Inspector Steve Soden of the Victoria Police Youth Affairs Office said the strategy would be used to support police in delivering consistent and effective solutions for child and youth-related matters.

"We are working with key government and community partners to focus on the factors and influences that contribute to youth offending and victimisation," he said.

"Policing is about making a difference, and using our role to help others who are in need of assistance."

Key priorities include reducing repeat offending, increasing effective diversion, reducing road trauma, violence and antisocial behaviour and improving relationships between police and young people.

"Our aim is to connect the community, ensuring that young Victorians receive the support they need," Insp Soden said.

The *Child and Youth Strategy* 2009–2013 is available at www.police.vic.gov.au on the Internet.

EQUIPMENTSHOWCASE

DIVISIONAL VAN



Photo courtesy of Holden

YOU'RE GOING HOME IN THE BACK OF A NEW DIVVY VAN

A two-door divisional van joins the Victoria Police fleet this month. The purpose-built vehicle, based on the Holden Commodore VE utility, was launched at the Royal Melbourne Show on 17 September.

The Transport Branch's Frank Melilli said the first divisional van was introduced to Victoria Police in 1951 for patrol duties.

Today, there are 160 divisional vans in operation across the state, which are the first response to

calls for police assistance and this number will grow to 200 by the middle of 2010.

"They are the most heavily-used vehicles in our fleet," Mr Melilli said.

"They're on patrol every day and are an iconic vehicle in Victoria. People really relate the vehicle to keeping the community safe."

"There is even a song about it 'You're going home in the back of a divvy van.'"

QUICKSTATS

YOUTH OVER-REPRESENTED

- ✦ Young people, up to the age of 24, represent 32 per cent of Victoria's total population.
- ✦ In 2008, 38 people under the age of 25 died on Victoria's roads. According to the Victoria Police Traffic Incident System statistics, of those who lost their lives:
 - ✦ 74 per cent were male
 - ✦ 66 per cent were single vehicle crashes
 - ✦ 68 per cent were crashes that occurred during high alcohol times between 6pm and 6am.
- ✦ In 2007, young people accounted for 47 per cent of all offenders processed for criminal offences.

POLICEFACT

DID YOU KNOW?

More young people are charged with assault than any other offence. It has also been estimated that about 47 per cent of all assault offenders and 43 per cent of all assault victims, were intoxicated prior to the incident.



CONSTABLE ZAK

AGE 10 ½

ROLE Host of the Constable Zak Kids' Website video series

DUTIES ... Helping kids learn about Victoria Police and the different jobs members do through the Constable Zak online videos. I am making 12 videos with the Victoria Police Digital Media Unit for the Kids' Website. In one video I interviewed Chief Commissioner Simon Overland, in another I went on a boat with the Water Police and next I am visiting the Dog Squad.

INTERVIEWING SIMON OVERLAND WAS ... Slightly nerve-racking, but still fun. He was very, very nice.

SINCE BECOMING CONSTABLE ZAK I HAVE LEARNT ... There is much more to being a police member than I first thought.

MY FAVOURITE VICTORIA POLICE UNIT IS ... The Dog Squad because I love dogs.

THE BEST PART OF MY JOB IS ... Meeting lots of interesting people and getting the answers to questions that I did not know.

I WOULD LIKE TO TELL THE KIDS OUT THERE ... Make good choices and enjoy your life.

Note: See page 14 to find out about Constable Zak's latest video.

ODD SPOT

MILK AND ASHES

It is 1am on Sunday, 23 August. Senior Constable Robbie Colcott takes a break from the miserable final match of The Ashes. Could the night get any worse?

Promising his partner fresh milk for breakfast, the off-duty Frankston Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Unit (SOCAU) member pops out to his local convenience store. With arms full of groceries, he chats with the attendant when a fast moving figure catches his eye.

A man enters the store, challenges Sen Const Colcott and charges at him with a baseball bat ready to swing. Sen Const Colcott jumps at the bat, prying it from the man's hands and scuffles with him across the store until he has him under control.

Minutes later, a team of Frankston police rush through the door. They are more than surprised to see that their off-duty colleague has apprehended the offender in question.

While Sen Const Colcott suffered a small cut on the chin and fat lip, missing the final innings of The Ashes series was not so bad.

RE-THINKING DRINKING

One Bunyip man has learnt the hard way that drinking can severely impair one's judgement.

In June this year, the alcohol-affected man got in his car and attempted a U-turn in the town's main street and mounted an embankment.

The local police arrived and while checking the man's identity with licence records, he wandered off. Police drove after the man, pulling up beside him a short distance away.

Mistaking the police car for another, the man asked them for a lift.

"Yeah sure mate, hop in," was the reply from the accommodating members.

It was not until he had climbed into the passenger seat that the man

realised he was seated next to the same policeman he had earlier encountered.

Local members said the man could be heard swearing as he was driven to the police station.

NIGHT SWIM

Two teenagers attempted to evade police in early September by jumping from a speeding car into a river in Warrnambool.

A short pursuit ensued after the vehicle was detected speeding near Allansford.

The two males tore through a caravan park and jumped from the car as it smashed through a wooden barrier and into a river.

Police were waiting on the other side of the bank and promptly arrested the pair.





HE WAS
ONLY

19

ROAD TRAGEDY CAN STRIKE ANYONE, AT ANY TIME. LAST YEAR 303 PEOPLE WERE LOST ON VICTORIA'S ROADS. MOST THINK IT WON'T HAPPEN TO THEM. IT HAPPENED TO THE PHILLIPS FAMILY. SPEAKING WITH *POLICE LIFE*, THEY SHARED THE STORY OF THEIR SON BRENTON, WHO WAS TAKEN FROM THEM FAR TOO SOON.

EDITORIAL MARK TESORIERO

The youthful face in the photo stares back with an infectious smile.

Handsome and full of life, he wears a chef's cap and a cheeky grin that reveals a jovial nature.

"He really was the life of the party," father-of-four Gary Phillips said of 19-year-old son Brenton.

"A real joker – he was always getting dressed up and having a few laughs."

Sadly, this is the last photo that Mr Phillips and his wife, Sue, have of their youngest son.

.01

LAST PHOTO

- .01 Of the 303 people killed on Victoria's roads last year, 24 per cent were aged 18 to 25.
- .02 Taken just hours before his death, Brenton wore a chef's cap and enjoyed himself with friends at a Teppanyaki restaurant in South Yarra.



"A gifted ice-hockey player, he had completed a pre-apprenticeship course and worked part-time at Safeway while deciding his career path."

Examples of his craftsmanship, like the television cabinet in the family room, adorn the Phillips' home.

Excessive speed in wet and foggy conditions was blamed for the fatal crash that claimed Brenton's life.

At 1.43am the late model Holden Commodore that Brenton was driving mounted the median strip, hit a tree and split in two.

The impact launched the back seat and rear wheel section about 40 metres from the vehicle's main body.

The Holden's three occupants, along with countless pieces of debris, were thrown from the car and onto Frankston-Dandenong Road.

The passengers survived the crash and were taken to the Alfred Hospital with serious injuries.

"There was a knock on the door at about 2.40am," Mrs Phillips recalled.

Taken just hours before his death, the photo shows Brenton celebrating a friend's birthday at a Teppanyaki restaurant in South Yarra.

An album compiled by friends following his death contains similar poignant images of Brenton throughout his life.

The images, along with a raft of cherished memories, are all the family has left of him.

Known to his mates as 'Sprinta', Brenton was killed in a horrific car crash in Dandenong South on 18 June this year.

A gifted ice-hockey player, he had completed a pre-apprenticeship course and worked part-time at Safeway while deciding his career path.

"It was one of Brenton's mates that had driven past the crash and recognised the number plates.

"His sister answered but they wouldn't tell her, they only wanted to speak to his brother, Nicholas.

"I heard people talking in Nicholas' room and came out.

"I knew straight away from the look on their faces."

After the family viewed the crash scene, Mr Phillips, his eldest daughter and friends set off to deliver the heartbreaking news to Brenton's grandparents.

While contacting family and friends at home, Mrs Phillips heard her son's death broadcast on 3AW radio.

She immediately phoned the radio station.

"The report said that a P-Plate driver had been killed," Mrs Phillips said.

"But he wasn't just a P-Plater, he was our son."

Mrs Phillips later sat down at her computer and penned an emotional article for the following day's edition of the *Herald Sun*.

The courageous piece, published verbatim in the opinion section, urged youngsters to be cautious on the roads.

"Young drivers need to realise this is not just another story," she wrote in the article.

"This is real life and there's no second chances.

"My son made a fatal mistake and he's never coming back.

"That could be you. It could be your brother, your sister, your mate."

While young drivers believe it will not happen to them, statistics prove the contrary.

Of the 303 people killed on Victorian roads last year, 72 or 24 per cent, were aged 18 to 25.

Victoria Police's Deputy Commissioner Ken Lay said young drivers, particularly males, were vulnerable on the roads.

"All road deaths are tragic, but it is particularly saddening that so many young people have died on our roads," he said.

"Inexperience, a sense of invincibility, sometimes poor decision making, being distracted by occupants and electronic devices, and peer pressure can all contribute to making driving a high risk activity for young people."

Mrs Phillips said she felt "terrible" for the other two occupants in the vehicle, one of whom remains in rehabilitation but is expected to return home soon.

"My daughter Carly goes over there three times a week and Nicholas goes to see her a few times a week," she said.

"Drivers have a responsibility for those in their car and have to be sensible with what they're doing."

Mrs Phillips said young drivers needed to realise that their actions had lasting impacts.

"Time hasn't helped, it makes it hurt more," she said.

"You always think they're going to come back, that he's going to come through that door.

"But he's not coming back, he's never coming back." ❌



SCHOOLIES CELEBRATION GOES WRONG

IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE AN END-OF-SCHOOL CELEBRATION WITH SUN, SAND AND FRIENDS. BUT, FOR ONE SCHOOLIE IT ENDED IN MONTHS OF RECOVERY AND REHABILITATION.

ULTIMATE SURVIVOR

- .01 A brutal attack during schoolies celebrations left Jon Hacker in a coma.
- .02 The Hacker family's Christmas was celebrated in a hospital room.
- .03 Jon celebrated his Year 12 graduation only weeks before the attack.



EDITORIAL MARIA CARNOVALE

Unlike most schoolies, Jon Hacker does not have memories of parties and girls. His memories are of a hospital surrounded by his friends and family.

It was in November, 2006, while Jon, 19, was celebrating his last year of secondary school that he became the victim of a vicious unprovoked attack that left him in a coma.

Jon and his friend Daniel, 18, were among hundreds of others celebrating on Victoria's Surf Coast in Lorne.

"I was having a good time. It was the fourth day of our holiday," he told *Police Life*.

"Everyone down there was really good to each other, really friendly. They had all finished school and were ready to have a good time.

"I felt safe because the resort where we were staying was only 500 metres down the road from the pub. It was very close," Jon said.

He and his friend spent most of the night at a local pub before leaving to make a phone call. It was while on the phone, standing on the sidewalk that Jon was attacked.

Several punches resulted in Jon falling to the ground and hitting his head on the pavement.

He woke in hospital about two weeks later with no memory of the incident and the task of getting his life back on track.

"I had to learn how to eat solid foods again because I had been eating soft food for so long," Jon said.

More than 30 days later Jon began to regain his memory although details of the incident are still a blank.

For Jon's mother, Suzanne Hacker, the memories of her son's life-threatening situation following the incident are vivid.

"The first six weeks we didn't know what sort of outcome there would be. That was one of the most difficult things for us as a family," Mrs Hacker said.

While Jon's sense of humour remains, his ability to do things that other people his age take for granted, like playing sport, do not.

"I had been playing football for Sebastopol for about two years. I was just starting to get into it," he said.

"Once I got out of hospital I spoke to the doctor and he said that I can't play any contact sport ever again. It's just too much of a risk."

Police began interviewing witnesses the day after Jon's attack and located the people they believed were responsible.

"It is also a lot more common to get into arguments when you are drunk and this is how fights start."

Jon's attacker was found guilty and sentenced to two years in a juvenile detention centre.

While many schoolies enjoy their holidays incident-free, Jon said it was important for those celebrating to be aware of their surroundings.

"Just think about what you're doing," he said.

"Stick together, be aware and don't drink too much."

Crime statistics show that alcohol is a large factor of assaults in Victoria for victims and offenders. This trend is seemingly increasing and to target this issue, Victoria Police's Taskforce Razon was established last year to ensure licensed premises behave responsibly.

Inspector David Blencowe said part of the taskforce's role involved working with pubs, clubs and bottle shops in popular schoolies locations such as Victoria's Surf Coast and the Mornington Peninsula.

"We visit these areas to ensure they are conducting their premises responsibly. We target the premises that are found to be serving people who are drunk or underage, selling too much liquor or where assaults are occurring," he said.

"There's a lot of peer pressure on young people to drink, but when you're really smashed you often don't have a good time anyway, especially if you can't remember it or end up with a hangover.

"It is also a lot more common to get into arguments when you are drunk and this is how fights start.

"We know that schoolies are at risk. Young people often get intoxicated in pubs and clubs, in their accommodation or in public places, then they become vulnerable to violence or sexual assault. There is also the risk of hospitalisation from drinking too much.

"Alcohol contributes to a lot of antisocial behaviour on the streets which affects the whole community."

Going out with friends will never be the same for Jon.

While he will not miss an opportunity to spend a night out with his friends, the newspaper clippings and hundreds of cards and letters wishing him well are a reminder of the devastating incident.

"A lot of the kids were traumatised by what they saw happen to Jon. They said they couldn't believe what had happened," Mrs Hacker said.

"It was the most horrific and painful time of our lives. Words cannot describe the way one feels when there is trauma to someone so young, so loved, inflicted by another young person for no real reason." ✕

"Everyone down there was really good to each other, really friendly. They had all finished school and were ready to have a good time."

NETWORKING NET

PROTECT YOURSELF
ONLINE WITH SOME
EASY MEASURES.

The Youth Affairs Office's Senior Sergeant Tim Hardiman is no fuddy duddy. He was young once and he remembers what it was like. But, things have changed since he was a boy.

One of those things is the Internet.

"I used to ride my bike over to my friends' houses to talk to them," he said.

These days, like most people, Sen Sgt Hardiman logs on to his Facebook page to see what his friends are up to.

CYBER CRIME

.01 Staying connected could have serious consequences.

CYBER PRESENTATIONS

VICTORIA POLICE AND THE AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE HAVE TEAMED UP TO GIVE PRESENTATIONS TO SCHOOL GROUPS ABOUT CYBER CRIME. FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.THINKUKNOW.ORG.AU ON THE INTERNET.

EDITORIAL MARIA CARNOVALE

"Facebook, MySpace and Twitter have given young people another method of socialising without having to leave home. These applications can even be accessed from almost anywhere via a mobile phone," he said.

With the freedom of the Internet, comes risk.

"There are a lot of dangers associated with using the Internet," Sen Sgt Hardiman said.

"Parents used to be able to vet who and what their kids saw, but these days it's not possible."

World Internet statistics show that more than one and a half billion people are using the Internet at any given time.

The popularity of social sites such as Facebook continue to grow, and are being used to share photos, chat, blog and more.

"Most kids have a television in their room, a stereo system, a laptop computer and a mobile phone," Sen Sgt Hardiman said.

"They want to stay connected 24-hours a day and don't see any issues with that. Some teenagers understand the risks around using the Internet, but when you first start using it, it's like a new toy."

Apart from some of the common risks such as identity fraud and distribution of pornography, an old threat is alive in a new environment.

What is usually reserved for the school yard, 'cyber bullying' can now be played out in front of thousands.

While bullying is not an offence in itself, Sen Sgt Hardiman advises it could easily result in a variety of offences being committed.

"Whether it's an inappropriate text, a picture or comment, it may be an offence. It depends on the circumstances," he said.

"If what has occurred makes you feel bad, talk to someone about it. It may not be an offence, but it may be a bullying incident and you can get help from a school counsellor.

"If you still feel bad about it, go to a police station and talk to a police member."

Sen Sgt Hardiman said there had been incidences of people being stalked online, which could result in a criminal offence.

Stalking can include continued harassment using any medium – in person, online or over the telephone.

"It could be sex-related, hate mail, threats to damage property or threatening to harm a person. These types of offences can be taken quite seriously."

In May this year, what was perceived to be an innocent text message resulted in twelve people being cautioned by police.

"A female teenager sent an inappropriate photo of herself to a male friend, who in turn sent it to other people," Sen Sgt Hardiman said.

STAY SAFE ON SOCIAL SITES

- ❖ Never share your date of birth, home address, phone number, or private information about you, your friends and family.
- ❖ Do not post images of others without their permission.
- ❖ Set your profile to private.
- ❖ Do not tell anyone your password.
- ❖ Do not post provocative images.
- ❖ Do not lie about your age.



"I meet a young teenage girl in a chat room and build a relationship with her. Then, I make a meeting with her."

Sen Sgt Hardiman said it was cases like these, known as grooming, where people developed a relationship and gained trust, which could land people in trouble.

"You think you know a lot about them, but is it really the person you know?"

"There's no harm in using chat rooms, but you must remember that you don't know the person on the other side."

While you check out your Twitter feeds and upload the weekend's photos onto your MySpace page, Sen Sgt Hardiman advises young people to think about what they are doing.

"It's important to be aware of what you can and can't do. It may seem like a bit of fun, but there could be consequences," he said. ✕

The incident resulted in a child pornography investigation – an offence which carries up to five years' imprisonment.

According to the Virtual Global Taskforce, a group of police organisations around the world targeting online child abuse, 50,000 sexual predators are online at any given time.

Sen Sgt Hardiman said that on a lot of occasions people in chat rooms are who they say they are. However, there are cases when they are not.

"Young people tend to believe what they're told through the Internet," he said.

"For example, I could be a male, 35, but I've registered to a chat site as a 17-year-old."

CYBER-BULLYING

- ❖ Tell someone if you are being bullied.
- ❖ Do not be part of bullying other people.

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation has information to help young people in bullying situations. Visit www.amf.org.au on the Internet to find out more.

"If what has occurred makes you feel bad, talk to someone about it. It may not be an offence, but it may be a bullying incident and you can get help from a school counsellor."

COMMUNITY CONSTABLES

- .01 There is a strong emphasis on working with the community and ensuring members are equipped to go about their roles safely. "The most important weapons you have as police members are your mouths and your minds," Chief Commissioner Simon Overland said.
- .02 Recruits undergo a two-week induction program that provides a taste of policing before engaging in more practical training.



TRAINING DAY

THE *POLICE ACADEMY* MOVIES AND CHANNEL 10 PRODUCTION *RECRUITS* ARE ENTERTAINING VIEWING. BUT THEY ARE NOT AN ACCURATE REFLECTION OF LIFE AT THE VICTORIA POLICE ACADEMY. *POLICE LIFE*'S MARK TESORIERO SPENT A DAY WITH THE ORGANISATION'S NEWEST MEMBERS TO EXPERIENCE LIFE AS A RECRUIT.

EDITORIAL **MARK TESORIERO**
PHOTOGRAPHY **ANDREW HENSHAW**

It is 8am on a Wednesday morning but the large auditorium is abuzz with excitement.

The recruits from Squads 13 and 14 of 2009 chat enthusiastically as they sit and wait for their guest speaker.

There is genuine excitement in the air.

They are immaculately dressed – the women with hair pulled back in blue scrunchies, the men clean shaven and collars pressed.

The room falls silent as a rear door opens and the imposing figure walks to the front.

With a grin on his face, Chief Commissioner Simon Overland eases the tension.

"You can call me Simon," he says as the group exhales and relaxes in their seats.

It is the third week of the residential training for Squads 13 and 14 after completing the two-week Introduction to Contemporary Policing module at the Victoria Police Academy in Glen Waverley.

Mr Overland dropped in to the View Mount Road property to welcome the recruits and discuss issues facing police in the 21st century.

It is a ritual he has performed with all recruits since becoming Chief Commissioner in February.

Superintendent Robert Hill of the Education Department said the induction module provided recruits with a foundation for future learning and development.

He said areas such as ethics, values, multiculturalism and policing history were covered before recruits engaged in more practical training.

Supt Hill said the first two weeks of training were completed in an informal atmosphere with recruits wearing plain clothes.

It is not until they begin the third week that they are presented with the blue uniform.

"We want to ensure they understand our history and the significance of wearing the blue uniform," Supt Hill said.

"Recruits are advised that they should wear the uniform with pride, integrity and professionalism.

"Do not be ashamed of the uniform, but more importantly, do not bring shame to the uniform either."

Timeline



8am
Chief Commissioner Simon Overland discusses issues affecting contemporary policing with recruits from Squads 13 and 14. "The test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, not the arrest rates," he said, quoting the father of modern policing, Sir Robert Peel.



9.15am
A recruit stands in the witness box of the Academy's mock courtroom. The courtroom is used to acquaint recruits with the legal conventions associated with attending court to provide evidence.



10.30am
Senior Constable Russell Kempster conducts a theory class on the use of Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) spray. Recruits from Squad 12 view a video and presentation that details the use, range, policy and aftercare of people affected by OC spray.



11.28am
As part of their defensive tactics training, recruits from Squad 10 are taught how to safely approach and intercept vehicles. They work in pairs and are taught to establish rapport with drivers, while remaining cautious at all times.

"Recruits are taught to defend themselves and the public but we also teach them that communication is a critical component of policing in 2009."

Recruits prepare for a further 20 weeks before graduating as a probationary constable and hitting the streets.

A six to 12-week stint follows at the Traffic, Drug and Alcohol Section in Brunswick before being assigned to CBD police stations as part of the Safe Streets Taskforce.

They are then sent to their training station, returning to the Academy every six months to reinforce their learning.

After two years they graduate to the rank of constable, receiving a TAFE-certified Diploma of Public Safety (Policing).

The approach to recruit training at the Education Department has changed dramatically in the past 12 months.

Supt Hill said a curriculum review was due to be completed early next year.

He said there was also a stronger emphasis on working with the community as well as ensuring that members are equipped to go about their role safely.

"Recruits are taught to defend themselves and the public but we also teach them that communication is a critical component of policing in 2009."

It is a theme that Mr Overland reinforces, telling Squads 13 and 14: "The most important weapons

you have as police members are your mouths, and your minds".

While recruits undertake physical training in defensive tactics and firearms operation, the majority of their time is spent studying law, policy and communication.

Just as the curriculum has changed in the past 18 months, so too have the Academy's formalities.

A relaxed atmosphere permeates its 16-hectare grounds, with strict rules such as saluting senior officers discarded.

"Saluting is no longer required at the Academy unless part of a ceremonial occasion," Supt Hill said.



1.48pm
The 'Village' at the rear of the Academy is a training area used for scenario-based learning for all members of the organisation, from recruits to the Special Operations Group. The mock outlay contains houses, a petrol station, bank, pub and shop fronts.



2.53pm
The thud of batons whacking into soft pads echoes around the grounds as recruits practice defensive tactics with Sen Const Kempster. Recruits are taught how to defend themselves and the public by using their batons and OC spray.



"I want to maximise the time they have to learn and make sure their minds are firmly focussed on that."

"Leadership is all about engagement and I'm failing the first test if our recruits are avoiding me because they're worried about forgetting to salute."

Recruit Tamara Davies, who was two weeks away from graduation when *Police Life* visited, said her expectations changed during her time at the Academy.

"I expected more of a boot camp style and strong focus on hierarchy," she said.

"There was a bit at the start but it gradually eased up and you felt a lot more like you were part of a team."

Academy training hours are from 7.30am to 4pm Monday to Thursday, and 7am to 3pm on Fridays.

It is not mandatory to reside at the Academy and recruits living at home are permitted to leave the grounds at the end of class.

Supt Hill said the Academy expected a high standard of professionalism from the first day of training.

"This is not a boot camp, but it is not a university either," he said.

"It is a unique learning environment which forms part of a disciplined organisation."

"Our recruits are being paid and they're expected to present for work each day like everyone else."

About 160 to 240 recruits are enlisted at the Academy, but that figure will increase after the State Government announced an additional 120 police members last August.

Supt Hill estimated the recruit population would swell to about 400 by October this year with a further 140 expected in January 2010.

"It's very rewarding to have enthusiastic recruits on day one of their training and see them leave here capable, confident and skilled police members," he said. ✕



3.47pm
Sergeant Dave Ryan takes recruits through legal scenarios that police face each day in the Law and Sexual Offences class. The study of law and legal issues comprise a large component of recruit training at the Academy.

MEET THE ROY BOYS

HOW A GROUP OF GLENROY TEENAGERS AND VICTORIA POLICE MEMBERS MADE A VIDEO, BUT LEARNT A WHOLE LOT MORE.

EDITORIAL ANNA ERBREDERIS
PHOTOGRAPHY SHANE BELL

ROY BOYS

- .01 The Roy Boys and Constable Zak have a ball during filming day.
- .02 The Digital Media Unit's Tim Arch shows Dean how to frame his shot.
- .03 Police and students head to their next location.

Dean Marchant did not think much of police. The 16-year-old, who sports blonde hair gelled to perfection and low-sitting pants, grew up in a Broadmeadows flats building.

"There was always a lot of drug use there, weapons use, domestic disputes – it was pretty rough," Dean said.

"The police would come there often. But then sometimes they wouldn't come."

THE VICTORIA POLICE KIDS' WEBSITE INCLUDES GAMES, POSTERS, VIDEOS AND MUCH MORE. GET ONLINE AT WWW.POLICE.VIC.GOV.AU/KIDS AND JOIN THE FUN.

Along with four classmates from Box Forrest Secondary College in Glenroy, Dean recently spent eight weeks working with police creating an anti-graffiti video for the Victoria Police Kids' Website. The students, dubbed the 'Roy Boys', worked with Moreland Youth Resource Officers (YROs) and the Victoria Police Digital Media Unit (DMU) in creating a script, filming and editing the video.

"The project was indescribable," Dean said.

"It's been awesome. Working with police and getting to know each other has made me think completely differently of them."

And the other Roy Boys agree.

"I used to think police were just about the law, but there's another side to them, there's more than meets the eye," Chris Elsbury, 18, said.

"When we first met, it didn't feel like we were meeting police, it just

felt like we were meeting new, fun people," 16-year-old Andrew Chookoon said.

Andrew, a smiley Samoan-Australian with tendency to break into song, initiated the project with police.

"We are all VCAL (Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning) students, and as part of our studies we needed to complete a volunteering class," he said.

"I thought it would be great to do something with police so we gave them a call."

Andrew spoke with Moreland police's YRO Leading Senior Constable Tracey Ramsey.

"I had heard that the Digital Media Unit were creating a series of videos for the Kids' Website and I thought this could be a great project to work on with these students," Ldg Sen Const Ramsey said.



"That's when I contacted Sergeant Marilyn Ross from the DMU. Straight away we planned out the project."

Sgt Ross is the brain behind the Constable Zak series, 12 short videos for the Victoria Police Kids' Website.

"We have a 10-year-old boy who stars as Constable Zak. Videos include visits to the Water Police and Dog Squad, information about dialling Triple Zero and cyber safety," Sgt Ross said.

"We thought it would be great to get the Glenroy students to make the graffiti awareness Constable Zak video."

The team planned out weekly sessions with the Roy Boys, which included concept brainstorming, script writing, location scouting, and learning how to use the video equipment.

If the Roy Boys were surprised by getting to know the police members, Sgt Ross and Ldg Sen Const Ramsey were astounded by the students.

"As a police member you are always dealing with that small percentage of the community who get into trouble and that can sometimes blur your perceptions," Sgt Ross said.

"So when we met these kids my expectation was that they would be only doing this because they had to."

"But after our first meeting I realised these kids were amazing, they were committed and I knew this project was going to be great."

After a series of one-hour planning and training sessions, the preparation culminated in a day of filming at five locations around Glenroy. Andrew and Chris starred in the video along side Constable Zak, while Roy Boys Dean, Tyson Caulfield, 18, and 16-year-old Leo Decierdo rotated through the roles of camera operator, audio and assistant director.

Many people find the role of a boom microphone operator trying on the arms. However, Leo took to it like a duck to water.

.02



.03



"Having learnt that one of the boys has done graffiti in the past was a shock to me," Ldg Sen Const Ramsey said.

"Now they understand the law, the difference between the commissioned street art and tagging and have even been asking for brochures to hand out at school."

Moreland's Inspector Sharon Cowden agreed.

"We recognise that police standing in front of a class is not necessarily the best way to drive anti-crime messages," Insp Cowden said.

"It is great to see Moreland youth writing and acting in their own anti-graffiti video, so that it is the kids, not police, driving the initiative."

It was all smiles and laughs on the last day of the project when the Roy Boys visited the Victoria Police Academy for a tour, lunch with the recruits and video editing.

"This was a fun day, especially seeing their faces when they saw themselves in the footage," Sgt Ross said.

"It's great when police and the community can work together in making our community a better, safer place."

"I hope the boys got a lot out of this project and that like me, with my sometimes skewed perceptions, the experience has shown them that police are just normal people too." ✕



WATCH THE VIDEO

Check out the Constable Zak graffiti video, as well as a behind the scenes look at the project at www.vicpolice.com.au/bluetube on the Internet.





GETTING A NEW START

A PROACTIVE INTERVENTION PROGRAM IS GIVING SHEPPARTON'S YOUTH A TASTE OF VOCATIONAL AND LIFE EXPERIENCE AWAY FROM THE CLASSROOM. *POLICE LIFE* CAUGHT UP WITH ONE OF THE KEY FIGURES HELPING YOUNGSTERS SECURE A NEW FUTURE.

EDITORIAL MARK TESORIERO
PHOTOGRAPHY SHANE BELL

The two teenagers can barely keep a straight face as they reminisce about their camping (mis)adventures.

They giggle about failed attempts to put up a tent, and chuckle about trying to stand up while surfing at Torquay.

But there is one thing that gets Tash Pearce, 15, most animated.

"Whenever Ross did that dance – the sprinkler – it just cracked me up every time," the Shepparton High School Year 10 student said.

And then, on cue, the pair erupted in laughter.

The Ross they are talking about is Leading Senior Constable Ross Fifoot, currently seconded to Operation Newstart from Shepparton police station.

As well as an entertaining dancer, Ldg Sen Const Fifoot is one of the driving forces behind the program in Shepparton.

An initiative between Victoria Police, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) and Save The Children Australia, Operation Newstart is a proactive intervention program for 14 to 17-year-olds.

The eight-week program is targeted at teenagers enrolled in secondary school, but who are at risk of offending or leaving school early.

Modelled on successful Melbourne-based programs, Operation Newstart provides participants more hands-on experience.

It is based on physically and mentally challenging outdoor education activities, exposure to post secondary vocational and educational opportunities and developing teamwork, leadership and practical life skills.

Eight students are selected after referral from the region's four public secondary schools: Shepparton High School, Mooropna Secondary College, McGuire College and Wanganui Secondary College.

Students participate in activities throughout the eight-week program that include camping, surfing, bushwalking, canoeing, first aid, indoor rock climbing and fitness assessments.

They are also exposed to career planning, driver training, TAFE workshops and drug and alcohol awareness.

Activities are staged weekly from Tuesday to Friday with participants expected to maintain a diary, which is signed-off each night by their parents.

At the program's completion, students receive certificates at a graduation ceremony attended by family, friends, teachers and local police.

Support is ongoing for two years after graduation from the program's three coordinators, Ldg Sen Const Fifoot, teacher Ross Hopkins and Save The Children youth worker Kristy Sewell.

Ldg Sen Const Fifoot said Shepparton was chosen as the program's first rural Victorian town because of its high drop-out rate for secondary students and youth crime problem.

"The aim is to get these young people back in school and to keep them crime free," Ldg Sen Const Fifoot said.

"The issue for some of these young people is that they don't always have enough support from within their environment and the exposure to what they can do after school.

"Hopefully we can open their eyes up to different vocations that they can pursue."

Since Operation Newstart's inception in 2007 at Shepparton, more than 80 students have been involved in 10 programs.

"If we can keep these young people in school for 18 months to two years more than they normally would have, then it can make a real difference," Ldg Sen Const Fifoot said.

Tash, who participated in the program a year ago, said she now had a clearer idea of what career path she wanted to follow.

"The aim is to get these young people back in school and to keep them crime free."



"A motor mechanic," she said.

"My little brother and I are always out helping dad work on cars so I wouldn't mind doing that."

Classmate Shadelle Hood, 16, is not so sure but said she appreciated the practical options that Operation Newstart presented.

"I definitely liked the driving part and meeting all the other girls," she said.

"It was more hands on and wasn't just us sitting down in a classroom reading."

A.J. Sutton, 17, and Leigh Hitchcock, 16, were similarly impressed by the program's diversity.

Leigh, a Year 11 student at Mooroopna Secondary College, was this year voted school vice captain.

"The camps were a good break from school and everything," he said.

"I'm still not quite sure what I want to do (after school) but it (Operation Newstart) gave me a few good ideas."

As the group prepared for photos with *Police Life*, funny memories from the program continued to be recalled.

But when the camera came out, some were reluctant to smile.

Ldg Sen Const Fifoot obliged, performing a short rendition of his infamous "sprinkler" dance that brought an instant chuckle from the quartet.

It gets them every time. ✕

.01



out&about

Cowes police station

EDITORIAL **MARIA CARNOVALE**
PHOTOGRAPHY **ANDREW HENSHAW**

COASTAL POLICE

- .01** Phillip Island is a hot spot for schoolies celebrations, festivals and events.
- .02** Events including those at the Grand Prix track play a large part in policing on the island.
- .03** Senior Constable Greg Morton is actively involved in community and sports groups.
- .04** Sen Const Carlson talks to students at Newhaven College about drug and alcohol use.
- .05** In the lead up to schoolies, police and liquor licensees are working together to ensure that students party responsibly.
- .06** The Cowes Pier is a popular spot for visitors.

I got a few things wrong when I pictured Phillip Island's tourist town of Cowes.

Surfboards and wetsuits were not scattered about the police station as I had imagined and there was not a penguin in sight.

Cowes is the main town on Phillip Island, which has a population of about 5000 people and swells to more than 25,000 during its busiest periods.

Only minutes after entering the police station I realised how small the island is.

I discovered that Senior Constable Nick Carlson and officer in charge Acting Sergeant Paul Wagner had gone to primary school together, live only minutes away from each other, and their wives are teachers at the same school.

"We're natives to the island," Sen Const Carlson joked.

"Between Paul and I, we know just about every person on the island and who is related to who.

"It can have its disadvantages when we pull people we know over."

The police station runs 16 hours per day with members on call for the remaining hours and assistance provided from the nearby San Remo and Wonthaggi police stations.

"Almost every weekend of the year there is an event on Phillip Island," A/Sgt Wagner said.

Whether it is the Christmas or Easter holidays, races such as the MotoGP or V8 Supercars at the island's Grand Prix track, schoolies celebrations, music festivals, or just a sunny weekend, Cowes police are on hand.

"We have a lot of major events and then we get all the normal policing duties that occur in Melbourne as well, like family violence, assaults, thefts and road accidents," Sen Const Carlson said.

"There's always something happening."

At the Grand Prix track, police keep a watchful eye, coordinating

and organising services for accidents on the track or taking care of the large crowds.

In preparation for large events and holiday seasons, Sen Const Carlson said police worked with the local council and other stakeholders to ensure things run smoothly.

"We are starting to prepare for schoolies now. We have a liquor accord that is running all the time, but when it comes to schoolies we're involved with licensees, especially the two pubs near the beach and all of the liquor outlets," he said.

In a bid to educate the young residents on the island, Sen Const Carlson gives presentations at the local schools about the dangers of drug and alcohol use.

"I talk to them about drugs, the effects of alcohol on the body and the laws. They usually ask a lot of questions and the conversation just goes from there," he said.

"I did a presentation at one school and that teacher told another. I've been inundated with requests from schools since then."

As I followed the two members

"We have a lot of major events and then we get all the normal policing duties that occur in Melbourne as well, like family violence, assaults, thefts and road accidents."



through the local secondary college, it was clear they were well known.

The members are often seen riding their bicycles around the island as part of their bike patrols.

"In this area, besides foot patrols, it is one of the best tools. You can't get a car park here in summer, whereas with the bikes we can get in and out of the main street easily," A/Sgt Wagner said.

"We also run bicycle education at some of the schools. We are running one at the moment with Cowes Primary School which will end with a road ride.

"We are taking the Grade 5 and 6 kids for a ride out to Rhyll where we'll have lunch and then ride back. It's about a 20 kilometre ride all up."

While Phillip Island may be the right place for rest and relaxation, Cowes police station is not. The members make good use of their surroundings, which has allowed them to make strong ties in community.

"Be it basketball, football, soccer or golf, we've got someone from the station involved in almost every club," A/Sgt Wagner said.

"There are so many things for young people to do here. Sporting-wise we've got everything, not to mention the beach. No matter which way the wind's blowing, one side of the island has a beach to use."

With popular surf beaches never far away, Sen Const Carlson said police had to be prepared for the results of some risky activities.

"We have more drownings from people being swept off rocks while fishing than we do road fatalities," he said.

"It's very different working here than it is in the suburbs.

"One member from Dandenong told me that in one week of working here he'd used the Water Police and the Air Wing to help with searches. In his nine years as a police member he'd never had the need to contact them."

From abalone poaching to drug raids, Cowes police have experienced almost everything.

As I walked back to the car for the drive back to Melbourne, it was a Blue Light Disco in Wonthaggi that was awaiting the presence of A/Sgt Wagner. ✕



THE STORY- TELLER

THIS WYNDHAM POLICE MEMBER IS DOING ALL HE CAN TO REDUCE THE RISK OF ROAD TRAUMA IN YOUNG PEOPLE.

THE STORYTELLER

.01 A/Sgt Cook, a traffic cop of many years, illustrates his road safety messages with true stories.

"He had hit a stationary car at a set of traffic lights, travelling at 162 km/h and killed the female passenger."

EDITORIAL ANNA ERBREDERIS
PHOTOGRAPHY SHANE BELL

The dead teenage boy looks asleep in the Daihatsu's passenger seat. A trickle of blood has dribbled from his ear. The stench of petrol and oil fills the night air.

"Can you smell it?" Acting Sergeant Steve Cook asks.

Flashing lights of blue and red echo over the crash scene. The dead boy's mate is on the ground, crying, sobbing. He is heavily intoxicated. All he wants to do is get in the car and sit with his lifeless friend.

"What would you do?"

A/Sgt Cook asks.

"Would you let him back in the car or would you take him down to the police station to be dealt with?"

"I let him back in the car," he tells.

"I watched as he cuddled the mate he had just killed."

This is the second year A/Sgt Cook has spoken at secondary schools across the Werribee area about hoon driving and road safety. But it is not your run-of-the-mill presentation.

"There is no bulls..t," the Wyndham Traffic Management Unit (TMU) member says.

"The kids see right through it. I tell them how it is."

A/Sgt Cook steps students through the above road fatality in detail. He finds two best friends in the room. He calls one David and one Brent.

"I tell David that he is the next best thing. He has a promising Judo career and hopes to make it to the Olympics," A/Sgt Cook tells.

"I tell Brent that he was driving the car the night David died."

"I tell the crowd that they are mates with David and Brent. Your mate just killed your friend, 'what do you do?'; I ask them."

You can hear a pin drop.

A/Sgt Cook is a big man. He stands at 6'0 with a clean shaven head, neat wire glasses and a thick tan-coloured leather watch on his wrist. A few tattoos protrude from the bottom of his shirt sleeve, a reminder from his navy days. He speaks with a passion. A/Sgt Cook is one of those police members who can not help going above and beyond.

"I also give the kids a personal account of a young person I pulled over for doing burnouts several years ago, Dean," A/Sgt Cook said.

"I spoke with Dean and told him that if he keeps driving this way he will kill someone."

"He thought I was full of it."

"About a month later we caught him travelling more than 60 kilometres over the speed limit."

Only a few days later A/Sgt Cook received a call while on holiday. Dean had just killed someone.

"He had hit a stationary car at a set of traffic lights, travelling at 162 km/h and killed the female passenger," he said.

A few months later Dean was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment.

"I show the students Dean's license photo. Then I show them his prison photo. I ask them to spot the difference."

Why does this traffic cop tell the students these stories?

"Just like the kids in the stories, these students think it will never happen to them. They feel invincible," he said.

"I'm there to show them it can."

The feedback A/Sgt Cook receives from the schools makes his job worthwhile.

"We have kids come and speak to us after the presentations and tell us they are worried about their brother's driving," he said.

"We can then arrange to go and speak with these boys about their driving and try to drive home these same messages."

Werribee has a reputation for having one of the worst hoon problems in the state. A/Sgt Cook is there to change that. This year, there has not been one hoon-related fatality or serious crash in the area. In 2004, A/Sgt Cook was a key member of the team who set up the Sunshine and Keilor Downs Hoon Hotline. In December 2006, when he moved to the Wyndham TMU, he took charge of the local Werribee hotline, re-launching the program with new vigour and commitment.

"The local hoon hotline went from having two to three calls a day to over 100 per week after the re-launch," A/Sgt Cook said.

"As a result we have been able to take action and get far more hoons off the road."

A/Sgt Cook believes strongly that education is a powerful tool.

"The older I get the more I realise that enforcement is not always the answer," he said.

"Education is essential. I want to make sure these kids understand the law and the risks of hoon driving."

The TMU member tells *Police Life* of his greatest fear.

"I get affected by road trauma," he admits.

"I hate doing death messages."

"The news I bring has just ruined someone's life."

"I don't want to be knocking on the door of any of these kids' houses. I don't want to ruin another life." ✕

THE ART OF twitter

HOW VICTORIA POLICE ENGAGED THOUSANDS IN 140 CHARACTERS.

EDITORIAL GLEN ATWELL

One week after Deputy Commissioner Ken Lay declared he knew nothing about Twitter, tweeting or the twitterati, the state's top traffic cop became an overnight cyberstar.

Okay, so Mr Lay was not as 'big' as Chk Chk Boom net-sensation Clare Werbeloff, and did not get as many clicks as the 3D dancing baby did last decade, but his posts during Operation Ardent in July and August boosted Victoria Police's Twitter followers from 900 to 4400.



WHAT IS TWITTER?

- For the 'under-a-rock' dwellers among us, Twitter is a website and service that focuses solely on one feature, 140 character updates.
- People text their friends, or followers, short message updates. Some friends ReTweet (RT) interesting messages to their list of followers, and on it goes.
- The 140 character limit includes spaces, but brevity is king in cyberspace and it provides an excuse to be short and sharp, something that may be considered rude in email land.
- Contractions are encouraged, but 'dnt abbrvte ur msg til its nrly unrdble'. Fill the 140 spaces with legible language, not a compilation of abbreviations!

Armed with 140 characters, a net-enabled mobile phone and a crash course in web-friendly shorthand, Mr Lay stormed the Internet with posts such as:

A Doveton man just blew .175, more than three times the legal limit. He told us he was heading back to the pub. He'll be walking.

And:

A 24yo Narre Warren man fishtailed out of Webb St onto the Princes Hwy. We impounded his Holden Rodeo Ute. Have fun on the bus.

Twitter users were stunned at Mr Lay's candour, and followers began to interact, re-posting his messages to their friends and generating an explosion in followers.

Readers provided police with pages of intelligence that may be used to craft future traffic operations.

One Twitter user weighed in to Operation Ardent discussion with:

Don't forget Cranbourne! Thompsons Rd & Sth Gipp Hwy down to Narre Cranbourne Rd area. Ppl love running red lights.

"A Doveton man just blew .175, more than three times the legal limit. He told us he was heading back to the pub. He'll be walking."

Others found the tweets hysterically refreshing:

Following @VictoriaPolice is like watching an episode of CSI. '...He told us he was heading back to the pub. He'll be walking.' Bwaahahaha!

Victoria Police will continue to use Twitter to spread the word about future traffic operations.

With Operation Ardent scheduled to continue into next year, it is certainly worth logging on and tweeting your input.

Just keep it short and sweet!

View Victoria Police's tweets at twitter.com/VictoriaPolice. ✕

PICTURE THIS

PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREW HENSHAW



By Darebin police's Youth and Multicultural Officer Senior Constable Crystal Cartwright, recently named Youth Officer of the Year.

I had not planned on becoming a Youth and Multicultural Officer when I joined Victoria Police in 2004.

I have always been community-orientated and found myself relieving a colleague in the position for a short time in 2007. I soon found myself enjoying another side of policing – one that focussed on early intervention and preventative work, rather than the traditional reactive policing.

This gave me greater insight into the broader role of policing and the opportunity to see the benefits that my work can have in reducing the over-representation of young people in crime statistics.

The Darebin community has a large population of migrants. Through my involvement with these communities, I became aware of the barriers and difficulties that many young people face post-settlement in Australia.

I realised that in order to prevent or decrease the number of young people committing crimes, we needed to address the causal factors that result in problem behaviours and provide additional support with education, housing, employment and other services. Too often as police, we focus on the behavioural outcomes, rather than what is causing them.

Four years ago we started the Bridging The Gaps Through Basketball program. This program involves local police coaching a team of Somali and Sudanese youth in a basketball competition.

I now have two teams involved in the program, which gives participants the opportunity to engage with the greater community and develop a support network.

As police we have benefited by identifying issues relevant to these communities, and through programs like this, we have the opportunity to address and respond effectively.

I am proud of the changes and growth of the young people involved in my work, not just in terms of the positive police relationships being built, but also in the achievements of the individuals and the community. Many of those involved in the program are now standing up as advocates and supporters for others in their communities, particularly newcomers.

I know that my involvement with these communities, and in particular the young people I work with, has changed their perception of police from that of fear and mistrust to an inclusive community-focussed service.” ✕

CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY

KICKING GOALS



VICTORIA POLICE HAS PAIRED UP WITH THE ESSENDON FOOTBALL CLUB TO BRING AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL TO YOUNGSTERS IN THE MOONEE VALLEY AREA. *POLICE LIFE'S* MARK TESORIERO LACED UP HIS BOOTS AND HEADED TO FLEMINGTON FOR A KICK WITH SOME OF AFL'S NEWEST RECRUITS.

EDITORIAL **MARK TESORIERO**
PHOTOGRAPHY **ANDREW HENSHAW**

Grey skies and driving rain overshadowed Debney Park Oval in Flemington as vehicles cautiously stopped in the puddled car park.

The rain, which had been falling steadily for the past two hours, pounded into the tin roof of the toilet block that sheltered shivering parents.

The prospect of an Auskick Clinic proceeding seemed about as likely as Melbourne challenging for this year's premiership.

But before parents could head home, pairs of skinny legs had leapt out of cars, squelching in the mud that formed near the oval's boundary line.

The children ran head first into the rain, launching footballs into the air and being drawn to the mud pile that covered the centre square.

There was another reason to brave the rain.

Flanked by about eight youngsters that barely reached his waist, Essendon midfield star Andrew Welsh, lobbed footballs to his waiting fans.

It was the second last night of the Andrew Welsh NAB/AFL Auskick Clinic, but the weather soon forced proceedings inside the adjacent Flemington Community Centre for a question-and-answer session followed by a barbecue.

The 12-week clinic, organised by Victoria Police and Essendon Football Club, is held every Tuesday afternoon during terms two and three of the primary school calendar.

The program, which began in 2007, aims to promote Australia's national game to multicultural youth throughout Melbourne's north.

It is subsidised, allowing children from lower socio-economic backgrounds to participate at only \$20 for the term.

Participants receive an Essendon football and hat, and have the chance to play at Etihad Stadium at half time of an Essendon game.

Victoria Police's Senior Constable Del King, a Youth Resource Officer for the Moonee Valley area, said the program had continually grown.

"We'd had issues in the past with police and local youth and we wanted to do something that involved the community and humanised police," she said.

"We all enjoy our footy and like to go for a kick, too.

FOOTY FANATICS

- .01 Children from across Moonee Valley came to Debney Park Oval in Flemington to participate in a football clinic with police and Essendon players.
- .02 Andrew Welsh is the centre of attention, flanked by leading senior constables Abbey Horsburgh and Del King, and participants from the football clinic.



"It's just grown bigger and better every year and we hope it will continue to gain popularity next year."

Sen Const King said uniform members and Crime Investigation Unit detectives from nearby Flemington and Moonee Ponds police stations often volunteered their time at the clinics.

Senior Constable Abbey Horsburgh, another Youth Resource Officer for Moonee Valley, said the program had helped bridge the multicultural gap for many in the community.

The Auskick Clinic hosts about 50 children, representing a mix of the different cultures that comprise the Moonee Valley area.

"As well as the police being able to interact with people of different cultures, the program has been able to introduce different cultures

The Auskick Clinic is just one of many sporting initiatives in the Moonee Valley area designed to build ties between Victoria Police and the diverse community.

Sen Const Horsburgh had only just returned from leading a group of Moonee Valley teenagers along the Kokoda Track days before the Auskick Clinic.

The Youth Resource Officers also organise a soccer program in Ascot Vale and stage basketball training at Avondale Heights.

They hope to field a team in the local junior competition next season.

"A lot of these children come from different suburbs and schools and get to hang out with children that they've never met before."

to some of our participants," Sen Const Horsburgh said.

"A lot of these children come from different suburbs and schools and get to hang out with children that they've never met before.

"Each year the parents also help out with the clinics so we get to build a relationship with them as well."

Multiculturalism was a theme highlighted by Welsh, who thanked the clinic's participants for the opportunity to learn about their backgrounds.

"I have learnt a lot about where you guys come from and about your families and I've really enjoyed myself during this time," the onballer told the group.

Moonee Valley members also participate in Essendon Football Club's Walk in Harmony, leading this year's procession to Etihad Stadium on bicycles.

Victoria Police's own football club also lends its support to the Unity Cup – another Bombers project aimed at strengthening ties with the Muslim community around Melbourne.

"Involvement in all of these helps to have a positive interaction with the community at a young age and to see local police members as more than just someone in a uniform," Sen Const Horsburgh said.

"From a policing perspective it's good to know the children in the community from a young age.

"It's also beneficial for them to have relationships with police that they might not normally have had a chance to previously." ✕



PEER SUPPORT

POLICE IN HORSHAM ARE TEAMING UP WITH LOCAL YOUTHS TO HELP FOSTER BETTER TIES IN THE RURAL VICTORIAN TOWN. *POLICE LIFE* DROPPED IN ON A WEDNESDAY NIGHT YOUTH GROUP MEETING TO SEE HOW THE PARTNERSHIP WAS FARING.

EDITORIAL **MARK TESORIERO**
PHOTOGRAPHY **ANDREW HENSHAW**

HELPING HAND

- .01** Sen Const Power gives the Koori Goolum Goolum group members some bowling tips.
- .02** Sen Const Power has developed an outstanding rapport with indigenous youth in Horsham.

Bowling balls roar down the alleys at Horsham's Lanes and Games as a group of teenagers laugh, joke and cheer at the hits and misses.

But the biggest laugh of all is reserved for one of the adults accompanying the group.

In his first game of the night, Senior Constable Les Power is on the verge of a 'triple' – three consecutive strikes.

"I've never bowled three in a row before," he said, collecting his ball and lining up the prized pins.

All eyes swing to lane two, watching with interest as Horsham's Police Aboriginal Liaison Officer (PALO) releases the 12-pound orb.

The group is in hysterics even before the effort drifts wide and into the gutter.

"It must have been the flash that put me off," Sen Const Power jokes, referring to the presence of *Police Life's* cameraman in the adjacent lane.

It is this jovial nature and sharp wit that has endeared Sen Const Power to teenagers in the Koori Goolum Goolum Police Youth Group.

Organised by the Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative and Victoria Police, the group meets every fortnight for organised activities.

Goolum Goolum is an Aboriginal community organisation and the primary service provider for Horsham's indigenous community over the past 25 years.

It offers a range of services including clinical health, aged care, substance abuse programs and community care services.

The youth group usually consists of up to 20 teenagers, with a handful of adult volunteers and Goolum Goolum staff, joining Sen Const Power and other Horsham police.

The average age of participants ranges from 12 to 20 with some former members now employed at the co-operative and volunteering to help the youth group.

With the aid of Goolum Goolum's Chris Harrison, the youth group was initiated four years ago for Koori youngsters living in and around Horsham.

The Department of Justice funded the program in the first two years, while the Victoria Police Youth Fund contributed finances for the last two.

Sen Const Power estimated that about 1000 of Horsham's 20,000 population were indigenous.

"It's an opportunity for police to liaise with young people in the community in an informal basis and build relationships," he said.

"Hopefully the kids can confide in us if they have any problems and we can act as role models to them and others in the community.

"The best thing is when they see us on the street later in uniform, they'll recognise us and will be more inclined to come over for a chat."

This ability to connect with the community's youth is evident as Sen Const Power speaks with teenagers during bowling.

He jokes and inquires about their school, work or sporting lives.

Everyone passing through the bowling alley, young or old, knows Sen Const Power and is happy for a chat.

"It starts from the point of respect," he said.

"If you treat people with respect they'll show that to you in return.

"These children are very respectful and great to be around."

This trust with Horsham's indigenous youth has been forged through a variety of activities undertaken by the group.

Throughout the year participants have enjoyed bowling, indoor soccer, rock climbing, surfing and bike riding.

They have also been on two camps – to Melbourne and Anglesea – and for the past three years have competed in the 404 kilometre Murray Marathon paddle race.

"The best thing is when they see us on the street later in uniform, they'll recognise us and will be more inclined to come over for a chat."



Like similar towns around Australia, Horsham has its share of issues affecting youth.

Goolum Goolum Chief Executive Officer Robert Berwick said high school drop-out rates were extremely high among indigenous teenagers, with some assuming greater care duties within families or attaining seasonal work.

Sen Const Power said social problems compounded once seasonal work ceased.

"If the jobs don't keep coming up they will go back on the dole and have a lot of spare time on their hands," he said.

"You can see the worry that if there's nothing to do, they can get involved in alcohol and possibly drugs and then the next port of call is the boys in blue."

"It's an opportunity for police to liaise with young people in the community in an informal basis and build relationships."

Goolum Goolum serviced about 650 clients last year but, much like its youth group program, requires continued funding to maintain support services.

"This perception that these indigenous children in the community are troublemakers and no good is completely untrue," Sen Const Power said.

"You just have to look at the people involved in the youth group – they're all fantastic.

"I can't speak highly enough of the program and the children we have involved." ✕

FROM THE ARCHIVES

A PIECE OF OUR PAST

CARTOON CONNECTIONS

In the past, humorous cartoons regularly appeared in *Police Life*. This cartoon featured as the poster of the March, 1989 edition and was drawn by *Police Life* illustrator, Roger Harvey. The illustration was titled Sat'day arvo. ✕



.01

BELT UP ROAD SAFETY GAME

To send out a message of road safety and the added safety of seatbelts, this game was introduced in 1975.

Today, putting on a seatbelt when you get inside a car is automatic. However, when the use of seatbelts became compulsory in Victoria in 1970, it took some time for people to get used to them.

In 1975, to encourage the use of seatbelts, Victoria Police and the *Sun Newspaper* released the Belt Up game.

The game was similar to the Snakes and Ladders game.

However roads lined the board and a hospital and police station featured.

PLAYING SAFE

- .01 A typical Sat'day arvo for Victorian police.
- .02 The Belt Up road safety game is on display at the Victoria Police Museum.



The Victoria Police Museum's research has found that seatbelts saved more than 200 lives the year after they were introduced.

The Belt Up game is on display at the Victoria Police Museum at the World Trade Centre, Lower Concourse Level. Main entrance via Siddeley Street (near corner of Flinders and Spencer streets), Melbourne, Victoria. The museum is open Monday to Friday from 10am to 4pm excluding public holidays. Entrance is free. ✕



.02

WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN POLICE LIFE 50 YEARS AGO?

Our Exhibition Attracted 50,000 Royal Show Viewers

Ned Kelly's Gun

SEVERAL THOUSAND people gathered at the exhibition at the Royal Melbourne Show to see the famous gun which was seized by police at the Glenrowan siege.

The gun, which was used by Ned Kelly and his gang to kill the police at the siege, was on display in a glass case. It was a .45 Smith & Wesson revolver, and was in excellent condition.

The gun was seized by police at the Glenrowan siege in 1904. It was the only one of its kind in the world.

The gun was on display in a glass case at the exhibition. It was a .45 Smith & Wesson revolver, and was in excellent condition.

Champion Bloodhound

THESE THOUSANDS of people who gathered at the exhibition at the Royal Melbourne Show to see the famous gun, also saw the champion bloodhound, which was on display in a glass case.

The bloodhound, which was a champion of its kind, was on display in a glass case. It was a .45 Smith & Wesson revolver, and was in excellent condition.

The bloodhound was on display in a glass case at the exhibition. It was a .45 Smith & Wesson revolver, and was in excellent condition.

The Royal Melbourne Show was as popular in the 1950s as it is today. *Police Life* told of an influx of visitors to the 1959 show where Victoria Police featured an exhibit of firearms.

The most popular feature was Ned Kelly's gun, seized by police at the Glenrowan siege, which stood among firearms used by police all over the world.

The exhibit was significantly different to the most recent Victoria Police exhibits where the divisional van and information about operational policing were highlights, and fingerprinting techniques were examined. X

