



## L2P learner driver mentor program delivering results for young people in Knox

26<sup>th</sup> June 2017

Learning to drive has become easier for the young people of Knox thanks to the L2P learner driver mentor (L2P) program.

In Knox, the innovative L2P program is delivered by headspace Knox with additional support provided by EACH. Knox L2P Coordinator, Andrew Gardiner, said the L2P program assists learners under 21 years of age, who do not have access to a supervising driver or vehicle, to gain the 120 hours driving experience required to apply for a probationary licence.

“For most young people, gaining the 120 hours of supervised driving that’s required is easy, but for others it can be a real challenge.”

“Some young people don’t have access to a vehicle in which to practice, others don’t have somebody to supervise them, some don’t have either,” Andrew Gardiner said.

Last month, the Knox L2P program celebrated young learner Tiffany obtaining her Probationary Drivers Licence following support from the program. Tiffany was referred to the program after it was identified that problematic relationships with her parents made it difficult for her to obtain the required driving experience.

“I was terrified to start driving but the guidance provided by Corinne made me feel more comfortable” Tiffany said. While driving, Tiffany’s mentor, Corinne, developed a trusting and supportive relationship by providing Tiffany with the tools she needed to be a safe and confident driver.

“If I can be instrumental in these young people’s lives to be safer drivers then that is a positive experience and benefits all people on the road” Tiffany’s mentor Corinne said.

During the course of the Knox L2P program, Tiffany’s relationship with her mother vastly improved and they were able to re-commence regular driving sessions together. Tiffany attributes this improvement to the assistance provided by the L2P program.

Corinne said that while undertaking the role of a mentor within the Knox L2P program, she had the opportunity to be a positive role model and offer guidance from her own life experience to assist disadvantaged young people.

Andrew Gardiner said that it was very satisfying to see the young people of Knox benefiting from this program in a tangible way.

“Since gaining their ‘P’ plates, some of the participants have secured employment which may not have been possible if it were not for the program. The ability to drive has meant they can attend job interviews and then drive to their jobs,” Andrew Gardiner said.

In the five years from 2011 to 2015, 240 drivers aged 18 to 25 years were killed, seriously injured or sustained other injuries. This comprises, 22% of all crash statistics, the highest proportion of any age group. "Road safety and good driving habits are something that the whole community benefits from and it's pleasing to see the results achieved by Knox L2P program to date" Andrew Gardiner said.

Recently, the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) released additional funding to target particularly vulnerable young people to allow them to gain access to the L2P program within a shorter timeframe. As a result, the Knox L2P program is currently looking for volunteers over the age of 21 with driving experience to help learner drivers gain on-the-road driving experience through the L2P program.

Training is provided and anybody interested in becoming a volunteer mentor should contact the L2P Coordinator at headspace Knox on (03) 9801 6088 or email [L2P@each.com.au](mailto:L2P@each.com.au).

L2P is funded by the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) and is managed at a State level by VicRoads. headspace Knox and EACH run the L2P Driver Mentor Program within the Knox City Council area.

**Headspace media contact:**

**For more information on the program, to arrange a photo opportunity or more interviews/quotes, please contact Andrew Gardiner, Knox L2P Coordinator, on 9801 6088 or via [L2P@each.com.au](mailto:L2P@each.com.au) and/or [www.headspace.org.au/knox](http://www.headspace.org.au/knox).**