

supporting e-learning opportunities

## Community Engagement

### building creative e-learning partnerships

Australians in regional, rural and remote communities face some unique challenges in accessing education and training opportunities due to isolation, distance and a lack of teaching and learning programs.

Technology can, and is, making a difference, enabling more and more people to access education and training regardless of their age, location or background.

In 2006, the national training system's e-learning strategy, the Australian Flexible Learning Framework, funded six projects to foster and embed e-learning in some of these communities.

### The Edge Project

**Aim:** To give disadvantaged young people, who were disengaged from traditional school settings, a positive experience of learning and associated growth of confidence and self-belief.

**Learning model:** The young people were all attending adult and community education (ACE) centres and were connected to learning through digital tools they used everyday, such as iPods, mobile phones, MP3 players and the internet. They were all given a 256mb USB stick as an initial 'carrot'.

A tutor from Southern Metropolitan Regional Council of Adult, Community and Further Education (based in Melbourne, Victoria) then led the young people to a new e-learning experience – the creation of a digital story.

The program was delivered using free software in two or three hour sessions, once a week, over a five-week period. Teachers were mentored at the same time as the young people to increase their e-learning skills.

**Outcomes:** The program was delivered to 50 young people, who each created their own digital story. The work produced by the young people was mapped against formal assessment requirements for the *Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning* or language and literacy programs offered through the ACE centres.

The five ACE centres set up a support network for the teachers and are promoting e-learning further within their organisations. Southern Metropolitan Regional Council of Adult, Community and Further Education is managing a state-wide research project looking at organisations offering a blend of face-to-face and online delivery.

**Partners:** Prahran Neighbourhood House, Skillsplus Frankston, Cranbourne Community Centre, Merinda Park Community Centre, and Narre Community Learning Centre.

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