

BOLT – Bicycles over lunch time

We are writing to you to seek your assistance for a very important project that RAP is supporting, in partnership with Uniting Care SouthPort. We believe this project is a very good fit for our Club in that it supports at risk young boys in our local community.

You will note that I have included only our male RAP members in this mail – this is because the basic requirements for our Club's involvement can only be delivered by males – ie mentoring the boys in the lunchtime program, and to a lesser extent carrying out work on the bicycles themselves, in the afterschool program.

Just to recap on what the **BOLT** program is – the **BOLT (bicycles over lunch time)** program supports boys aged 9-12 years who are at risk of disengaging, by providing positive adult role models through a practical hands on program revolving around bikes. It also includes lunch and weekly discussions regarding topics that relate directly to these young boys such as communication, resilience, leadership etc. A trained youth worker and volunteers provide support and for some of the participants these are the only positive adult role models in their lives. These boys have been identified by their school as starting their lives in a position of disadvantage and with the real possibility of taking their issues with them into adulthood.

There are **three** major opportunities where you can be of assistance:

- Firstly, and most importantly, to mentor a young boy at Albert Park Primary School for the next school term commencing 11 July and running for 10 weeks during the school term – this is the ***BOLT lunchtime program***. This would necessitate a consistent, once a week attendance for one hour over the lunch time period. This is where they are desperately short of volunteers. You would be working with a youth worker from UnitingCare Southport. (Please speak to Libby directly if you are interested in becoming a mentor in the next term – her mobile is 0412 203 319.)
- Secondly, attendance (and this can be ad hoc, whenever you are free) at the ***BOLT after school program*** – this is more of a “rolling up your sleeves and pitching in” scenario and will involve some bike restoration tasks and general interaction with the boys. This builds on the success of the lunchtime program as well as providing a more detailed understanding of bikes, bike mechanics and bike restoration. ***BOLT after school*** also helps the boys more deeply address topics such as violence, masculinity, anger management and the transition to teen years. ***BOLT after school*** is held every Wednesday from 3.00pm to 5.30pm at the UnitingCare facility in Dorcas Street, South Melbourne. I re-iterate – this is not a weekly commitment, just a “when you can” scenario.

If you think this is for you – then why not pop in and have a chat with Chris and Adam at 317-329 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne (9690 1188) – just say you are RAP and you will be very welcome!

And lastly, (and this will be open to all RAP members) **the donation of boys' bicycles** which are in reasonable shape for the boys to work on. These can be delivered during the day at UnitingCare SouthPort, South Melbourne and I'd like to thank those members who have already donated bikes – they were very much appreciated!

In summary, please, please have a think about these three opportunities to participate in a fabulous program (and speak to Chris and Arie who have observed for themselves a lunchtime session – their feedback is amazing!) and don't hesitate to speak to me should you require clarification on any detail.