

BREAK THRU PEOPLE SOLUTIONS

KEEPING IT TOGETHER FOR MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

Mental Health Week is 9-15th October 2011 and to help raise awareness of youth mental health issues, Break Thru People Solutions in Victoria is running an art competition for secondary students aged between 15-18 years. This is the first year the competition is running in what will become an annual event.

The competition is open to students in the Northern Metropolitan Region of the Department of Education and Early Learning (65 schools including those who educate students with disabilities and/or are disadvantaged). Suburbs in the area include Craigieburn, Sunbury, Glenroy, Strathmore, Brunswick, Northcote, Althington, Ivanhoe, Research, Kangaroo Ground, Hurst Bridge, South Morang and Epping.

The theme of the competition is **'Keeping It Together'** and students can submit either a painting or a drawing.

"Breaking through barriers and creating futures is what our organisation is about. In bringing awareness to the issues of mental health in the community, particularly with the youth who are the future, we hope to expel the current stigma attached to mental health," says Maruska Batakovic, Region Manager for Break Thru Victoria.

An exhibition will be held during Mental Health Week at the Break Thru's Greensborough office with cash prizes being awarded to the top three artwork pieces on opening night - first prize winning \$300, second prize \$100 and third prize \$50.

There will be three judges on the judging panel including Chris Reynolds, local artist and manager of Neami Art Studios.

"This is a great initiative and a constructive way to raise awareness of mental health, particularly among young people who are forming their views about such things. Hopefully the theme will be a spur to think and discuss, both for the artists and the viewers. This art competition will be an opportunity for the artists to draw literally on their creative strengths and contribute to raising awareness of this important issue," says Reynolds.

The competition is open now until Friday 23 September.

For more information in the competition and how your school can be involved, please contact Judith Pauwels at Break Thru People Solutions – 03 94799744