



# LIVING CONNECTED ONLINE YOUNG MENTORS PROGRAM

*Living Connected is a not-for profit community enterprise providing services for the social well-being of elders helping them to remain independent, connected and engaged through digital inclusion.*

## Young Mentors Program

Early this year Living Connected had planned to run a Young Mentors Program in partnership with local high schools. Sponsored by the eSafety Department of the Federal Government, <https://www.esafety.gov.au/seniors/be-connected-young-mentors>, this program trains school students to help members of the older generation with their use of technology. It also encourages students to learn from the seniors' life experiences. The program was put on hold when schools and aged care facilities closed. Now that Living Connected is running all seniors' help sessions online, we are doing the same for Young Mentors.

## How does each Round of the Online Program Work?

We recruit a group of up to 12 high school students and invite them to attend 2 one hour Zoom sessions, held after school a week or 2 apart. There they are introduced to the basics of digital mentoring and practise some techniques of doing this online with seniors. There are also short presentations by experts that challenge the students to reflect on their own use of technology and their perception of what older people do online. This is followed by discussion of the issues in small breakout groups.

Students then arrange to join 2 of the online help sessions run each week by Living Connected, Under the supervision of our trained mentors, the students get real mentoring experience helping seniors 1 on 1. Many of our regular clients are looking forward to it!

At the complete of the program, students will receive a certificate issued by the Federal eSafety Commissioner.

## A Successful First Run.



Recently we invited 12 school students (friends and family of Living Connected team members) to trial the first online version of the Young Mentors Program. This is proving a great success and after the 2 groups sessions, students will get real practical experience at the virtual help sessions with our clients during the school holidays. Details of these sessions are described below. Now that these sessions are online, people anywhere can participate at any session.



## Virtual Help Sessions for Seniors

Living Connected now has its own Zoom licenses. For the last few months we have replaced our many face to face Dropin sessions with 5 virtual Dropin sessions a week as follows: Monday 2:30pm based on Southern Illawarra groups; Wednesday 10am based on Wollongong groups; Thursday 1:30pm based on South Coast groups and 3pm based on Northern Illawarra groups; and Friday 10am based on Shoalhaven Groups Thursday. Anyone can come as long as they get the relevant Zoom Meeting ID from one of our emails or by contacting us

**Contact Helen Hasan for more information and help**

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