**Transcript**

***Kath Salem – “Dropping Out” & youth disengagement (from formal education) in the Sunraysia region***

My research hypothesis and project which is based in Mildura is undertaking a study into youth disengagement, and in particular in Sunraysia. What I’m really interested in is looking at the relationship between youth disengagement from education and other aspects of young people’s lives. 2006 census data shows that for Mildura alone we have 316 15-19 year olds and 506 20-24 year olds who are not in any form of education, nor are they in paid employment. So that has social and economic implications for a region.

My thesis will explore questions like: how do we define and measure disengagement? What is the profile of disengaged young people in terms of class, age, gender and ethnicity? And, what is the correlation, if there is one, between disengagement in education and disengagement in other aspects of young people’s lives. So, things like family, leisure, sport and social networking.

The key outcome is to develop a unified and formal community strategy for overturning the levels of disengagement in Sunraysia so that young people themselves, and a place like Mildura, can benefit from the social and economic contributions that young people can make to the life of the community.