



**Intergenerational Mentoring Programs: Building Connections between Marginalised Youth and  
Older People in Community, by Professor Lorelle Burton**

**Thursday the 17<sup>th</sup> of October 1pm in B006, Health Sciences Centre**

**Abstract:** Global population ageing necessitates a focus on the psychological wellbeing of older people. Older people face significant risk factors to their mental wellbeing, including natural life transitions and losses, social isolation, illness, disability, and chronic pain. Active ageing framework advocates that social participation is key in maintaining psychological health as people age autonomy, relatedness, and competence are innate psychological needs met via the social environment. This qualitative research examined mentors' psychological experiences in relation to mentoring youth at Toowoomba Flexi School, an alternative educational model for disenfranchised youth. The findings support the concept of active ageing and self-determination and contribute important insights regarding the lived experiences of older men and women who mentor disenfranchised youth. Outcomes from this research are currently informing the development of intergenerational mentoring programs in regional Australia.



**Bio:** Lorelle Burton is Professor of Psychology and Head of School of Psychology and Counselling at the University of Southern Queensland. Lorelle is an internationally recognised psychology educator who has received multiple national teaching excellence awards, including the prestigious 2016 Australian Psychological Society Distinguished Contribution to Psychological Education Award. Lorelle has led national research projects on student transition, has served on national learning and teaching committees and boards, and has been an invited assessor for the national learning and teaching awards and grants. Lorelle has authored multiple psychology textbooks, including the market-leading first-year Australian psychology textbook. Lorelle's current research extends beyond academia to promote community-based learning and wellbeing. She works collaboratively with marginalised groups, including disenfranchised youth and older people, and her team has recently developed an Indigenous cultural heritage trail in partnership with Aboriginal communities in south-west Queensland. The Community Futures research she leads seeks people's own stories as a powerful way to strengthen communities and find new paths to support them into the future.

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