**NICHE Rural Visit Background**

The National Institute for Challenging Homophobia Education (NICHE) is a gathering place for ideas, people and resources with a focus on regional, rural and remote Australia.  It is ‘What Happened Next?’ after the 266-day Beyond ‘That’s So Gay’ Challenging Homophobia Tour of Rural Australia completed by Daniel Witthaus in 2010: [www.thatssogay.com.au](http://www.thatssogay.com.au/)

NICHE works  to combat rural lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) youth suicide.

NICHE aims to:

* Gather the best ideas, people and resources in challenging rural homophobia and supporting LGBTI young people; in doing so, NICHE can map what’s working, what’s not and identify gaps;
* Work with, and build upon, successful, effective projects and organisations in regional, rural and remote Australian communities;
* Partner with mainstream and philanthropic organisations to leverage their resources for regional, rural and remote Australia.

We’re hoping to challenge rural homophobia one town, one story and one cuppa at a time.

At the launch of NICHE, Daniel Witthaus announced he wanted  regional, rural and/or remote Australian communities to apply for him to spend a week in their community helping them find better ways to challenge homophobia and support local LGBTI people.  Daniel’s time for these  weeks will be free.

**NICHE Rural Visit**

Rural visits have included locations such as Mt Isa (QLD), Bunbury (WA), Coffs Harbour (NSW) and Shepparton (VIC). Examples of what NICHE has done in these locations include:

* Practical training for teachers, health professionals and police: supporting LGBTI young people and challenging homophobia;
* Student workshops: Beyond ‘That’s So Gay’ 101, Pride & Prejudice (formally evaluated);
* Guest speaker presentations: forums, key note addresses at conferences;
* Community leader training for LGBTI people and their allies;
* Media: TV, newspaper and radio;
* School visits with student welfare staff;
* Advocacy to mainstream organisations, inc. local government; and,
* LOTS of cuppas: to hear everyday stories, audit school/community/organisational readiness, etc.

Daniel Witthaus is happy to go to new places, or return to those places he visited during the original Beyond ‘That’s So Gay’ Tour.

**Contact**

Contact Daniel if you think your community could benefit from a week-long NICHE visit.

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