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Sunbury Leader

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Michaela Hayes, Tori Luke and Raquel MacSweeney are ready for Daisy Day at the Village Green. Picture: HAMISH BLAIR

Hope blooms eternal

Barry Kennedy

Teenager starts Daisy Day after tragedies strike town

A SUNBURY teenager touched by a tragic period for the town is stepping up to lift spirits and encourage healing.

Tori Luke, 19, knew something had to be done to turn lives around following the suicide by a young person in Sunbury last month and other recent tragedies.

And so Daisy Day was established, bringing families, community groups and mental health organisations together. "When someone takes their life,

it has a ripple effect — there wouldn't be too many of us in Sunbury who aren't feeling it even if they didn't know them," Ms Luke said.

"It's as if it seems harder to get away from your problems these days with the social media devices helping build up the pressure."

Having also known two young people who lost their lives to suicide during her school years, Ms Luke posted on Facebook of the

need to do something. It found huge support.

So she took the idea of a special day to Sunbury Community Health, which supported her vision by securing permits and helping her form a committee, Minds Matter.

Ms Luke said she chose daisy as the symbol of the day as it represented simple beauty.

Her aim for Minds Matter is to provide ongoing youth support in

Sunbury and assertive actions such as greater take-up of Mental Health First Aid by sporting and community groups.

Sunbury-based Hume councillor and Victoria Police youth resource officer Leigh Johnson said Ms Luke's drive was inspiring.

"It is close to the heart of the community, this issue of mental health right now, and for Tori to take it on herself from the perspective of a young person

saying 'what can I do', is so important," he said.

Sunbury Community Health building healthier communities director Bernadette Hetherington said the reaction to Ms Luke's idea revealed just how much young people needed connection and healing in light of recent tragedies. Daisy Day is at the Village Green this Saturday, 11am to 3pm.

Details: facebook.com/MindsMatter.Sunbury

Phone Lifeline on 13 11 14

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