

Learner drivers linked to teachers

■ **Ashwini Saseedaran**

A NEW driving program will help young people across the South West complete their 50 hours of supervised driving experience needed to gain a driver's licence.

Set to begin in December, the Regional Youth Driver Education Program will connect learner drivers with a volunteer mentor and automatic vehicle through an

online system. After uploading their availability, a profile and a photo to the online program, volunteers and participants will be able to match according to suitability and then meet at a safe and public place organised by the South West Youth Driver Development Program.

Run as a consortium, drivers will be inducted through program managers while volunteers will be

screened for a national police clearance, working with children check and licence check through Volunteer South West.

Schools and organisations like Clontarf South West and Headspace Bunbury will join the program to offer support.

Costing \$15 per hour and a half, coordinator Susie Delaporte said the program would provide a platform for those without supervisors

or vehicles to genuinely accrue their driving experience and commit to safer driving.

"It will make for safer roads and create more opportunities for young people in terms of work, study and training," Ms Delaporte said.

"There are good boundaries and there is no exchanging of personal information or contact details."

Excited for the roll out to make a

big difference in the community, she said it was all about harnessing technology in clever ways to make a meaningful and real difference to someone's life.

Initially formed at Bassendean Youth Services, manager Greg Neri said apart from improved freedom and employment, the program opened up a world of opportunities for a range of young people from diverse backgrounds.