

OUR VISION

Young people overcoming adversity & building independence

OUR PURPOSE

Youth Outreach Service: Towards hope and independence – whatever it takes

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A GREAT START TO 2016

BY GREG – TEAM LEADER SPRING HILL & STAFFORD

To start 2016 with fresh eyes is a marvellous thing. During the month of January the entire YOS staff undertook training in the area of Restorative Justice. The name can sound a bit harsh but the program is anything but. It is all about restoring the relationships of the clients that access our service, when an element of trust is broken.

I don't know about you but every now and again something rises up in a relationship of mine. Some misunderstanding, confusion, anger, or disagreement can get in the way of our friendship and relationship. Restorative Justice is simply about bringing restoration to these relationships.

In the school many of the students have had relationships with others damaged and not had the chance to restore them, losing all the good memories along the way. The YOS staff are now better equipped to help in the process of bringing relationships back together in the school room. This is important as often the only consequence has been expulsion or suspension for the student.

Not long after this training, six students were involved in an incident and the following four Restorative Justice meetings resulted in letters of apology being written, students saying sorry, students being able to tell the other how this affected them and planning about how to rebuild the broken friendships, the correct way.

As I see it, this is the right way to go. It doesn't bring punishment but hope and a future for all involved.

ANIMAL THERAPY

BY MAREE – HEALTH & WELL-BEING OFFICER SPRING HILL

We have taken our trauma informed care to another level at YOS! Animal therapy is now a daily addition to our service provision with the acquisition of two Murray River Turtles. The turtles are twelve months old, have been together since hatching and were purchased from a private seller at Victoria Point complete with tank, toys and filter. Students have named the turtles, George and Todd. The daily exercise of removing the turtles from the tank for feeding is popular with anyone on site at Spring Hill. George and Todd have regular photos taken and our valuable young people often watch them and interact with them through the glass.

In addition, we have a fortnightly visit from an Australian Bulldog named Rocky. He hangs out with students and other service users, enjoying their company and interacting with games and slobber!

We love having the option of animals as part of our service delivery and our young people respond so positively to the experiences provided by our volunteer animal members.



*Meet George or Todd....
(We aren't sure which one!)*

LEARNING ABOUT LENT WITH PINE RIVERS CORPS

BY NELL – TEACHER YOS LAWNTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL

During the season of Lent this year, the Corps Officers from The Salvation Army Pine Rivers Corps, Major Lyn and Major Nellie, came and shared with the YOS Lawnton Independent School the story behind Lent. We also heard about the Self Denial Appeal, which is an annual fundraising event to support The Salvation Army's evangelical (mission support) and community development in poverty-stricken countries. Class Denver participated in Lent by focusing on no swearing during class-time. Each time a class member used inappropriate language, they donated to the Self Denial Appeal money box that the Majors gave to our class. We presented the money box to Major Lyn and Major Nellie at the end of Lent, who shared with us the countries our financial gift would help support.

Major Nellie finished off our Lent journey by returning to talk to both classes about the Easter Story. Each person was given the opportunity to put their fingerprint on a wooden cross in white paint, then Major Nellie painted over these with red paint, to symbolise Christ's blood washing away our sins.

It was a significant time of remembering Jesus sacrifice and learning about self-denial. Thanks Majors Lyn and Nellie for leading us in this special time of reflection.



CLIENT THANK YOU

EXCERPT OF A LETTER FROM A STUDENT AT YOS LAWNTON SCHOOL

Dina & Nell,

Thank you both so much. You look after me so well. No one has ever been interested enough to care about my health or to bother with me, so I greatly appreciate everything you do and say and the lengths you go to for me.

I've come to understand that the reason I love coming to school here is that you guys, and the people I surround myself with, all want to see me succeed and that alone makes me want to get out of bed in the morning.

I have never, ever felt so valued or appreciated in my life and you both play a big part in that.

So thank you – for what you may think is a small thing is huge for me. You've changed my life and have opened my eyes in a way no one could.

MEET OUR NEW YOUTH WORKERS

KRYSTLE



Hi, my name is Krystle. I have been working at YOS as a Youth Worker since mid-January. I moved to Australia from New Zealand almost five years ago. In New Zealand I was employed as a homelessness social worker working predominantly with people who were sleeping rough.

Prior to YOS I was working as a case worker, working with young people who were experiencing, or at risk of homelessness. I was made redundant towards the end of last year, and feel extremely lucky that I was employed by YOS and am able to continue working with young people in the sector I am passionate about.

LAURA



Hello! I'm Laura, I've been at YOS for about 2 and a half months, as a Youth Worker at the Spring Hill site. This is my first graduate job since finishing my Social Work degree at QUT, and I'm really enjoying working with the young people who access this service. While at Uni, I had a few different jobs in human services, including residential care, disability support and domestic violence crisis work.

But I've always been passionate about youth work, and I am always inspired by the resilience and strength of the young people we support at YOS. I'm also very passionate about dogs, social justice issues, and tea, and I'm looking forward to having the coolest last name ever in June, when I marry my wonderful fiancé, becoming Mrs Gomez! Thanks for having me on board!

CRYSTAL'S CANDLES & THE BIG FISH EXPERIMENT

BY WAYNE – COMMUNITY / YOUNG ADULTS PROJECT WORKER

In the beginning, a small group of young people were asked if there was a project they'd like to do as an experiment for a social enterprise start-up. These young people were the school leavers who had graduated from the YOS flexi schools and were getting stuck with what to do next, now they had graduated. We had three young women who wanted to make candles and one lad who jumped on board.

Having no experience at these things, we began by doing some Google research and buying a few odds and ends to commence our first start-up.

There was a honeymoon period followed by the ups and downs of life. Despite the young ones having a good time, we unfortunately had to bid farewell to two candle makers due to them relocating to find employment. This was a setback as K was very enthusiastic and had a keen mind for business. This left two crew - one being TR who was the creative genius. But shortly after, we sadly had to say goodbye to her too due to family matters. This left Crystal, who up until now had been learning the trade and working in the background.

There was a moment when we had the choice to put the brakes on or press on. Crystal chose to go ahead and then went on to make over 100 candles for our first shot at the markets. On that day she sold nearly 50 individual candles and was on a high. She was good at this. When the customers heard her story of setbacks and now could see her overcoming – they were sold!

In 2015, The Salvation Army had provided a scholarship, "The Fellows Grant" to pursue further education, which I was fortunate to receive. The course I studied was the Social Entrepreneurship Incubator course at the University of Queensland.

Crystal accompanied me to give a presentation at UQ. After the presentation the lecturer Dr Lance Newey, invited Crystal and I to participate in a new course at UQ this year. Wow!

There have been possibilities spring up from various places but it is very encouraging to see Crystal share her secrets with others so they too may benefit.

Many thanks to the Salvos, Dr Newey, University of Queensland, Darren McGhee (YOS Manager), YOS and the Big Fish motley crew.

GOOD NEWS STORY

BY DINA – EDUCATION SUPPORT WORKER YOS LAWNTON

Todd first started attending YOS in 2013 for the Anger Management Program. He was then referred in to the YOS Lawnton Alternative Learning Program to complete his year 10 in 2014. Todd continued in the YOS Lawnton Independent Non-State School to complete his year 11 and 12 in 2015- 2016.

When Todd first attended YOS he described himself as angry and hated everyone. He stated that he didn't care about anything and had no desire to change. Initially when attending school in year 10 he did little to no work. He continued to talk about how he didn't care if he passed or failed and didn't even really want to be here. Todd would rarely participate in any activities planned by the school and continued to say everything was "stupid".

Now in his final year of school - Todd is a different person. Through the persistence of the teachers and youth workers at YOS Lawnton, Todd talks about how he is excited and proud to finish school. He is eager to do his work and remains extremely focused on completing any tasks.

Todd has also become somewhat of a mentor for some newer, younger students. Staff will often find Todd talking to newer students about how he was nervous too when he started at YOS, but that it gets better. He also encourages other students to participate in any activities and just to "give things a go".

Todd is polite and respectful to all staff and is always willing to help out wherever needed. He will often volunteer his time to help staff move furniture, pack up, clean up and even help to run activities.

Todd is set to graduate with his year 12 certificate this year and both he and his family couldn't be prouder. Todd is a classic example of a young person wanting to change and working hard to achieve his goals.

YOS SNAPSHOT



Emma and Michael selling Easter chocolate bunnies at Fortitude Valley Train Station. This was our first fund-raiser for 2016 and during the weeks leading up to Easter, we were able to raise nearly \$2,500.00! Thanks to all those who assisted us with this fund-raiser.



During March, the Spring Hill site students and staff had the opportunity to participate in an Indigenous cultural workshop. Amongst other things, the participants learnt a traditional dance and cultural body painting. A great time was had by all.

George and Todd having fun in their tank!

