Many hands make fun work

Save the Children

Quarterly eNews

June 2021

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Register today for our conference: ONLINE June 18

Our 2021 conference is online with lots of vision, action and tips from our partner schools. Use the link above to secure your ticket to a morning of ideas and inspiration on Friday 18 June from 9.00am-12.30pm.

Spotlight on anxiety

With youth anxiety at record levels courtesy of Covid-19, take this chance to hear from neurodevelopment educator and author Karen Young as she translates the neuroscience of anxiety into practical applications for Hands on Learning. Karen founded the popular website, Hey Sigmund, attracting many millions of readers each year worldwide and is author of the best selling book Hey Warrior for young people with anxiety.

Handy workshops

Match your learning needs with practical ideas from HoL teams from across the country:

- BRICKLAYING – 101 of bricklaying with tips and tricks for HoL projects.
- ANXIETY – Join keynote Karen Young and learn more about supporting students by helping them to understand and manage anxiety.
- SUSTAINABILITY – From mud kitchens, workbenches, storage units, and community projects, discover just how versatile the pallet really is!
- HoL PRECINCTS – New ideas for precincts and projects from around the country.
- CAFÉ ACTION – Experience the power of paddock to plate with insights into the workings of a HoL Cafe program.
- AUTISM – Consider the many strengths students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) bring to a team and the successful approaches being used in HoL.

Roma State College hits the ground running

A school day spent learning by doing is going down very well with the first intake of students at Roma State College in outback Queensland. Starting with tool tests, the team followed up making photo frames, and then progressed to bug hotels. Artisan-teacher Ben Banks reports that the engagement wins are already clear with student comments like:

"Yesterday was the best day! We got to use tools all day!"

"I want to get a job doing this type of work when I'm older."

"I'll stay the whole day so I can keep working."

"Can I come early tomorrow to start the project?"

HANDS ON LEARNING
TOOLBOX TALK
HoL artisan-teacher newsletter – Issue 6 MAY 2021
People to belong to: physical and emotional safety
TOOLBOX TIPS
Shape of the Day

This term our top tips newsletter to our partner schools highlighted how artisan-teachers can use the HoL framework and methodology to maintain safety and create a sense of connection and belonging. All issues of Toolbox Talk are located in the eLearning tile of your online school portal.

Our cover

Fantastic to have Merri River, Koroit and District Primary and Hampden Specialist schools join together to film one of the practical workshops for our 2021 conference.

HANDS ON LEARNING

Join our team

A great chance to help create positive change in the school education space through Hands on Learning in the western and northern regions of Melbourne and greater Geelong. Click here to apply

We are a growing, highly driven team with an employee engagement score of 93% providing positive responses to key domains such as:

- I would recommend Save the Children as a great place to work.
- I often feel motivated to go above and beyond.
- I rarely think about looking for a job at another organisation.

TOPP TEN TIPS

It is the third year of Hands on Learning at Mildura's Chaffey Collge and Assistant Principal Jeff Topp is loving his role as HoL artisan-teacher.

Best reason for a school to invest in HoL?
HoL is a big commitment of a school's resources. Even if it was only for one student, it is worth giving them the opportunity to develop skills they don't know they have, but actually there are a group of students getting the benefit.

Best precinct project?
Our 2021 mosaic. New and old HoL students worked together building real ownership and pride in our space.

Best tool in HoL?
Cordless drills are the most poular.

Best meal we have shared in HoL?
Defintely a tie between fried rice and butter chicken.

Best school project?
Our work on the beautification of the garden beds around the school has really lifted the profile of HoL.

Best student outcomes?
Students are referred for a range of reasons but attendance and behaviour improvements stand out. One boy has only been in HoL for four weeks and his attendance has improved massively. Another had trouble meeting behavioural expectations for a whole school day and we have seen a significant reduction in behaviour referrals.

Best upcycling?
Transforming former fruit boxes into an awesome kitchen bench for our HoL hut.

Best community project?
Working at Mildura Primary School helping rejuvenate garden beds.

Best reason for an Assistant Principal to be a HoL artisan-teacher?
I oversee engagement and wellbeing at the school so it is good to be 'doing' and working alongside the students and I've also got hands on skills I can share.

Best thing about HoL?
The opportunity to give these students the chance to be successful and develop valuable life skills.

UNSTOPPABLE UPCYCLING

Everything old is new again

Lest we forget
Ingenious ingenuity
Padua College Tyabb, Victoria

Tranquil reflection
Tired bathtubs and handbasins have never looked this good
Taylors Lakes Secondary College, Victoria

Ideal island bench
Cupboard frames and timber offcuts combine brilliantly
Leongatha Secondary College, Victoria

Delightful daybed
Green up a neglected space and add a new seating option
Ipswich State High School, Queensland

Dimboola's 'Great Wall'
The wonder of reclaimed timber and iron
Dimboola Memorial Secondary College, Victoria

Disused desk delight
One very happy customer
Ararat College, Victoria

From the chook house to an outhouse…
Extra innovative conversion
Leeton High School, New South Wales

Sensational seating
Pallets really deliver as there is never enough seats
Noble Park Secondary College, Victoria

THE IMPACT OF A PLACE TO BELONG

From struggling to get out of bed to turning up at school every day. Feeling like you have a place to belong at school has had a huge impact on school attendance at Taylors Lakes Secondary College.

Hats off to artisan-teachers Mon and Con. Students, parents, school leaders, and the local MP are united. Hands on Learning is helping students thrive.

What was school like before HoL?
"We used to have huge trouble getting Mitchell to go to school, it was a real battle every morning; he just didn't want to go. Ever since he started HoL he has been at school every day. He comes home proud of what he is achieving. His teachers are noticing that he is doing the work, and he now has had lots of 'green posts' on Compass with staff commenting about the growth in his confidence. He is so much happier. Mitchell just didn't feel connected to school before Hands on Learning and now he is thriving."
Sharon, parent

How does HoL work at Taylor's Lakes Secondary?
"Hands on Learning creates a place to belong for some of the kids who struggle with normal everyday learning. It builds connection and belonging. It is an opportunity to see these kids' strengths in a different environment. Being able to work in a small group is a whole different, very positive scenario."
Louisa Norwood, Assistant Principal

Why do schools need programs like HoL?
"We know that every kid learns differently, so it was a pleasure to provide Taylors Lakes Secondary College with a grant through the Local Schools Community Fund to build the fantastic Hands on Learning shed and to purchase the tools to kickstart the program. It's wonderful to meet the students who are benefiting from the program and a pleasure to support schools like Taylors Lakes Secondary College to provide educational opportunities that serve all of their students. It is really powerful to see the added motivation that these students now have to do well at school and beyond"
Dr Daniel Mulino, Federal MP for Fraser

What are the outcomes?
"For our students the impact has been massive. In one case, the absences were significant with a real lack of connection with school until now. It is not about what is happening in HoL. The real win is about the growth in confidence and being able to self-regulate emotions and behaviours across classrooms after such a short time being part of the program."
Danny Dedes, Principal

What difference has it made for your child?
"Hands on Learning has changed Keegan's attitude and focus at school. He was never a natural hands on person, so when he told me about all the things they have built I was proud and amazed. It is great to see his ability to work with a mix of kids, and his confidence has gone ahead in leaps and bounds. To hear him speaking today in front of all these people makes me so proud."
Murray, parent

"Ever since I started in Hands on Learning, my grades have gone up and it has helped me to want to come to school. When I think Hands on Learning I think teamwork, accomplishment, and re-engagement because that is what has happened to me,"
Mitchell, Year 9.

"It is a really beneficial program for kids that don't enjoy school and are not motivated. When I think Hands on Learning the things that come to mind are commitment, teamwork, and Mon is cool,"
Keegan, Year 9.

BUILD IT AND THEY WILL COME

A floodplain habitat to improve the local pobblebonk population (Eastern Banjo frog) was the winner of the 2020 lockdown HoL@Home competition. Nine months later it is great to see that the Padua College Tyabb team have made real progress with more and more frogs appearing all the time.

The HoL precinct already had many of the geographical features needed to create a habitat for this endangered species. The team have worked hard to make their space more usable with drainage, clever landscaping and the help of a digger expertly driven by Sonny in Year 9.

A dry river bed to direct some of the extra water has been added, along with water tanks to harvest water off their HoL shed roof, allowing overflow into the dry river bed and even new seating. Eventually shallow seasonal wetlands will be added to be fed by the riverbed along with some indigenous grasses. Donations of crushed rock and stones from Hillview Quarries have just arrived as the team begin work on a wellness walk providing access to the wetlands without disturbing the wildlife.

"I'm more of a hands on person. It is easier to be out in the fresh air. It makes me concentrate better if I haven't been in a classroom for six hours. I have HoL on a Thursday and then Friday at school works so much better because you've had that day out of class and you don't have a headache. I'm not sick of school and I can concentrate much better in class,"

Sonny Year 9.

"Being in HoL has increased my confidence. You mix with a range of kids, and I've now built really good friendships. I was really shy before. I didn't talk much in class and always sat at the back, and never put my hand up to answer any questions. I just didn't feel very confident in myself. After a year being in HoL I'm starting to ask questions and trying new things. It's changed me a lot. I'm more confident to be myself. More willing to have a go at more things at school,"

Lailah, Year 9.

GIVING BACK AND FEELING GOOD

The impact of helping is far greater than the people you meet and the practical skills you develop.

Street sparkle

Scottsdale High School in Tasmania is teaming up with an energetic group of local mums to add a little magic around town. The resourceful crew have upcycled reclaimed pallet timber into 13 Christmas trees.

"We wanted to do something to brighten our streets for the local kids so every year we decorate the town of Scottsdale at Christmas. The HoL kids have been amazing. They have done a top job making these trees. It is a win-win all around. We don't fundraise so we are really grateful for the help. It has cost us nothing. This project is a feel good thing for us, but just awesome for the kids to see their work on display around town."
Local mum, Karen Rainbow, Scottsdale

"It's really good to be in Hands on Learning as you get to build all day. There are ten in our group and we work in pairs to cut the pallets up, knock out the boards, pull out all the nails and then reuse them. It feels great to be reusing materials, but it is a bit annoying to make the nails straight again."
Logan, Year 9

"My favourite part of HoL is getting to use the tools and going out of school to help in the community. The things we do for the community are work at the garden where we grow vegetables for people. Some of the things we have done in HoL are to make Tic, Tac, Toe boards and we made cheese boards for our Mums as a Mother's Day present."
Angus, Year 6

Feeding the community

Euroa Primary School's community garden began in 2019 with the support of community local, Fiona Nation who donated the garden space. The HoL students upcycled donated wooden fruit bins into wicking garden beds that today literally feed the local community.

"The food that we grew through lockdown last year was donated to Euroa Foodshare and shared with those in need. Any remaining produce was donated to local cafes. Our plan for the rest of the year is to add more garden beds and finish a display cart we have refurbished. Once installed we will harvest and display fruit and vegetables outside our garden so that people will be able to collect them directly from the garden."

Rebecca Lurati, HoL artisan-teacher, Euroa Primary School

One garden at a time

Surf Coast College HoL students have been lending a hand in the local community with a very personal project for Silvia, a 94 year young Torquay resident. The students have transformed her garden into a welcoming space to enjoy with her friends and family.

"The way these students are responding to the community gardening project keeps blowing me away. After talking to a few of the students' parents this week, they too are seeing greater happiness when the student arrives home after completing a day helping out others in need."

Adam Micallef, HoL artisan-teacher, Surf Coast Secondary College

A place to belong

People to belong to

Real things to do

A chance to give back

HANDS ON LEARNING

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