

CASTROL
MOTOR OIL

Enews

June 2016

HANDSON LEARNING 



Welcome

A very big thank you from our shared leadership team to the schools, artisan-teachers, volunteers, philanthropic supporters and community partners for the role you play in making Hands On Learning (HOL) possible.

Cameron Wiseman, Lisa Vagg, Richard O'Donovan, Hands On Learning Australia

OUR DIRECTION

Just under four years ago we set out on an ambitious journey to more than double the number of schools offering HOL. Thanks to innovative principals from our partner schools and the generous backing provided by our philanthropic supporters we have now more than tripled in size. This growth has helped to cement the reputation HOLA enjoys within the academic, education, and philanthropic communities as the most well regarded source of IN SCHOOL targeted intervention for the prevention of early school leaving.

Despite this recognition, no dedicated government funding has been forthcoming for schools to implement and sustain HOL, nor has government provided any support for the quality control and professional development work carried out by Hands On Learning Australia (HOLA).

We will continue to build the case for government support over the next three years as we further expand

and embed HOL as the pre-eminent solution to preventing early school leaving. Until government properly recognises and supports our efforts we are now securing multi year partnerships with our wonderful past supporters and looking to establish new partnerships to meet our growing needs. This support will extend the lifeline of HOL to more young people by:

1. Innovation through partnerships – Embed HOL as Australia's pre-eminent program that prevents early school leaving by forging three strategic partnerships.
2. Forging sustainability – Boost our capacity and financial stability via income streams that contributes 15% of annual operational costs by 2018.
3. Increasing accessibility to HOL across Victoria – Expand the HOL method into at least three new regions and up to 100 partner schools by the end of 2018.





OUR EVOLUTION

We are excited about artisan-teachers Seral Fehmi and Dave Scarlett joining our implementation support team as regional support managers for the Western Metropolitan/Ballarat and South West Victoria regions respectively. We are now entering an exciting phase of our organisational evolution as we transition from an organisation supporting less than 20 schools four years ago, to the 60+ schools we support today. Don't miss the chance to connect with Seral and Dave who have hit the ground running, providing targeted support to care for and grow the schools running HOL in their regions.

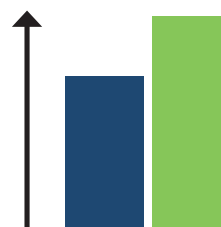
OUR EVIDENCE

We compare the progress of students from when they first enter Hands On Learning to how they are faring at the end of the year. This data specifically focuses on skills for work and life such as teamwork, problem solving and perseverance.

Impact of HOL on students 2015 – VICTORIAN HOL SCHOOLS

INTRA-PERSONAL SKILLS

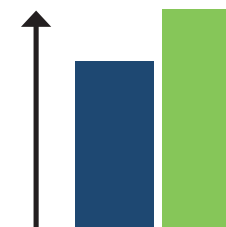
36%



*self awareness
self discipline
resilience
takes responsibility*

INTER-PERSONAL SKILLS

28%

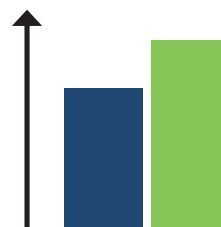


*listening
communication
resolving differences
self control*

● BEGINNING OF THE YEAR
● END OF YEAR

SELF MANAGEMENT

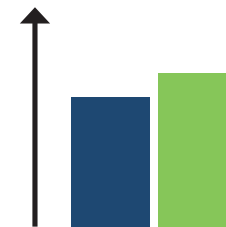
27%



*problem solving
managing time
setting goals
leadership*

BASIC LITERACY/NUMERACY

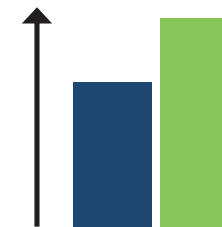
15%



*understand written
instructions
write basic reports
basic calculations*

SCHOOL ATTACHMENT

45%



*attitude to school
attendance
behaviour
motivation*



Engaging our federal politicians



There's no doubt both Education and Training Minister, Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, and his shadow, the Hon Kate Ellis MP, have a clear understanding of Hands On Learning and the outcomes for students after experiencing HOL first-hand. Minister Birmingham spent considerable time speaking with students at Fitzroy High School in their iconic HOL hut, a recycled W Class tram, while Shadow Minister Kate Ellis visited our 60th HOL school – Elisabeth Murdoch College – giving students the chance to talk directly with her about their learning and experience of school.

Since 2004 our philanthropic partners have invested significantly to test, refine and evaluate the HOL methodology, but only government investment will ensure every child who needs Hands On Learning can access it. With one in four young people not fully engaged in education, training or work, isn't Australia ready for politicians with the prudence to invest today in preventative solutions that improve the personal, social and educational outcomes of our young people even though they might no longer be in office to reap the political rewards?

New kids on the block

Access to Hands On Learning is growing across the State in 2016 with five new schools already starting Hands On Learning and another six due to come on board next semester.

- WESTERNPORT SC, HASTINGS
- MAFFRA SC, MAFFRA
- MELTON SC, MELTON
- ELISABETH MURDOCH COLLEGE, LANGWARRIN
- WANGARATTA HIGH SCHOOL, WANGARATTA



WESTERNPORT SC, HASTINGS

Recycled power poles are being installed to continue a perimeter wall at the entrance to the school.



MAFFRA SC, MAFFRA



MELTON SC, MELTON

Revitalising the school's outdoor picnic tables.



ELISABETH MURDOCH COLLEGE, LANGWARRIN

The team have ingeniously recycled fence palings recovered from roadside into these striking kitchen cabinets.



WANGARATTA HIGH SCHOOL, WANGARATTA



Going South WEST

Opening up a whole new region

Four schools in the Warrnambool region started Hands On Learning in the second semester of 2015 after an investigation by the South West Local Learning and Employment Network's Beyond the Bell project to determine how to best address the region's chronically low retention rates and keep local young people at school. Support from a range of community and philanthropic organisations has been invaluable in making it possible for these schools to introduce HOL.



HAWKESDALE P12 COLLEGE

It's a really productive team at Hawkesdale who make the most of everything they can lay their hands on. The kids recycle materials they discover around the school, building an impressive central table for their HOL hut from old shelving and a striking HOL sign at the entrance to their hut from an old toilet door. Let alone the formidable local reputation they have developed after cleaning up the entrance to the swimming pool, supporting the Golf Club with paving work, and building a little bush kinder for the preschool.



MORTLAKE COLLEGE P-12

"It was great building this table for the Agriculture class. Brodie, Luke and me - we did everything but put the poles in. It was the accomplishment and the way we got it done as a small team that I loved."

Gemma, Year 10



WARRNAMBOOL COLLEGE

Warrnambool College's HOL team has been active lending a hand in the local community – refurbishing trolleys for local Food Share organisation, working at the East Warrnambool kinder, and making small kennels for Flagstaff Hill for the dogs that protect Penguin Island. And their entrepreneurial spirit has been on display with the unique breadboards they have crafted from bamboo as a fundraiser for materials to complete their HOL hut.



BRAUER COLLEGE

The team at Brauer has concentrated on establishing the HOL space and helping out around the school, including painting the front fence, painting classrooms, renovating the Indigenous garden area and rejuvenating old outdoor tables. They also built bug houses for the Koroit primary school and worked with Conservation Volunteers Australia at Portland's Point Danger Reserve.



The news that Rainbow College Year 11 student Josh secured a work placement is no surprise to Bill Hutson, Secretary of the Rainbow Town Committee. “Josh stood out from the start – always wanting to do work, even coming in on the weekend when we worked on a big community project in the town’s main street.” Josh says he felt lucky to be doing HOL. “I started to learn a lot about myself and what I can do. You don’t know everything so when you get to do new things it’s great. I started to really like what I was doing working on the community project in the main street, I got more involved, worked harder and did some work experience last year with Parks Victoria and liked that and now I’m doing a work placement with the Shire. I’m going to finish Year 12 so I have qualifications to keep all my options open and try new things out. I love doing Hands On because you get opportunities to get out there and show how you work and what you can do.”



What we can do

Brooke is in Year 9 at Hawkesdale P-12 College in South West Victoria and loves working outside and getting to do stuff she enjoys. “Out here I can do maths and understand. When we are painting we need to work out how many tins of paint we need. In normal maths it’s too hard for me because I can’t see it visually. We have painted and replaced the timbers on the bench seats around the school. It makes you feel pretty good when other kids come up and thank us for what we have done. Doing HOL makes you feel like you want to come to school, you feel relaxed. It keeps us happier at school – and if you are happier you can do way more stuff.”



Chevy is proud of the vegetable boxes he built as part of the HOL team at Doveton College in Melbourne’s Southeast. “It’s great to know I did that and they are ready for people to do whatever they want. I’m more confident that I can do things now than before I came to HOL. I used to find it hard to concentrate in class and feel I was trailing behind. My teamwork skills are a lot better now. I used to like to do things on my own, but now I’ve got used to working in a team and it feels so much better.”



Building communities

Forging greater community engagement in learning

Across Victoria Hands On Learning has become a catalyst for schools to strengthen their capacity to build relationships with the broader community, and harness the community and parents to collectively encourage students' learning, and enhance student outcomes.



RAINBOW P-12 COLLEGE

Nothing beats real community collaboration and the restoration of the picket fence of Yurunga Homestead, Rainbow's key heritage attraction, is a perfect example. Kick-started by a grant from HOLA thanks to the support of the Newsboys Foundation, this project has literally galvanised the community. The historic homestead's management committee has baked and fundraised, the Shire has stepped in with leadership support, and local painter Frank 'Trigger' Millingham brought his 57 years experience in the painting game to his role mentoring and supporting the students. And in his assessment it is a worthwhile experience, "These kids are willing to work and willing to learn and that's the main thing." As another community leader observed, "If these kids can do this in one day a week, then imagine what they can achieve in a full working life?"



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER COLLEGE, BERWICK

The GWS Anderson Scout Camp in Officer has a volunteer committee of three and no funding so a helping hand from the Hands On Learning team is a real bonus. The students cleaned the exterior of the chalet, spray painted the toilet block and erected modesty screens, and installed wall partitions inside the recently donated portable buildings. "These kids have done a great job and made a fantastic difference to the usability of our facilities," Camp Manager, Rob Armstrong reports. "It has been so good to see the kids learning and actually enjoying the process." And it's a win win from the student perspective too, according to Year 8 student Michael, "We use measuring tapes in HOL so that makes it easy now that we are starting to do measuring back in Maths and I've got a bit ahead. That makes me feel better in class - I'm not stuck behind."



ROSEBUD SECONDARY COLLEGE

The construction of the Rosebud Secondary College Pump and Fitness tracks has been a genuine team effort. The Bank of Melbourne contributed \$19,000 to fund the essence of the project, Hillview Quarries donated crushed rock and sand, Mornington Peninsula Shire delivered all the mulch, local tradesman like Mark Blake and GP Hire made the heavy machinery available, and the Red Hill Riders worked closely with the HOL team on the design. It would be hard to find a better example of what is possible when we work together. And the best bit is the way the kids responsibly respond to what they have achieved, "It feels great to see other people using what we made," according to Emily, Year 9.



Shiny happy people

A modified primary school version of Hands On Learning was first piloted at Noble Park in 2013 to keep students connected to school as they prepare to transition to secondary. Adapting HOL has been so successful that Eastbourne Primary in Rosebud along with Dromana, Benalla and Boneo Primary schools now run modified HOL programs.

DROMANA PRIMARY SCHOOL

"Some of our kids go their whole school lives without shining, but in Hands On Learning it's their time to feel part of something special, to show what they can do, and you literally see them feeling proud. It's the highlight of their school week," Jimmy Peart, Grade Five Coordinator at Dromana Primary School reports.

Assistant Principal Nick Davern adds, "Traditional wellbeing programs are one on one, and that's where the group dynamic of HOL is such a safe environment for these kids to develop empathy, resilience, confidence and the skills to collaborate effectively with their peers. We target a couple of kids as leaders, a couple of students lacking confidence and self-belief, and a core group of students disengaging for a range of reasons. The results of 'learning through doing' have been impressive. A couple of our shy young girls really lacked self-confidence and the ability to speak out, so we have been thrilled to see the way they have evolved and now speak in front of school assemblies – the transformation is amazing. In fact we have had kids go through Hands On Learning and go on to become school captains."



Every school has fantastic ideas and rather than work in isolation, HOL primary school professional development workshops provide a unique chance to share ideas about what works and to learn from each other.



BONEO PRIMARY SCHOOL

"It's the time with these kids that is so precious about Hands On Learning. No matter how hard you try in the classroom, it is the HOL environment where they are doing things that they like more that allows us to build the relationships to help these kids develop the skills to become happy people and be able to apply those skills back in the classroom, in their family life, and in the future," according to Ryan Miller, 5/6 Team Leader at Boneo Primary School.



EASTBOURNE PRIMARY SCHOOL



BENALLA P/12 COLLEGE



NOBLE PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL





Innovative partnerships A real promise to the future

A new partnership with Monash University placing pre service teachers with Hands On Learning (HOL) teams at schools across Melbourne is fostering the development of new skills among future teachers that will improve the learning experience for a greater diversity of students.



The power of building a rapport with students and a new sensitivity to the complexity of the issues some students bring to school will have a lasting impact on Master of Teaching student Alex, after her placement with the HOL team and in the English classroom at Somerville SC.

"It was eye opening to see first-hand the opportunities programs like HOL give us to recognise the potential in every student. Not every child is going to flourish in the classroom. You could see the confidence of one student growing as he achieved more and more in HOL, and it was so good to see the way that translated back into his English class where he answered more questions and became more confident in his ability and what he could achieve."



Danae is a 3rd year teaching student at Monash University who has appreciated her placement at the St. Francis Xavier College so much she hopes to get a teaching position in a school that has an inclusion program like HOL.

"I can see the benefits for kids at risk of disengaging by taking the pressure off - especially within the current institutional one size fits all model of school. Recognising and catering to individual talents is a big focus of teacher education. Hands On demonstrates how powerful it is to find what the kids are interested in and use that to motivate them to learn."



A team with a great vibe

"If I could run Hands On Learning five days a week I would," is the way Assistant Principal, Simon Sherlock, sums up the value of HOL at his school.

"HOL personalises learning for our students and is one of a suite of experiences we offer at Doveton College.

Every student in the program has had a fundamental turnaround in their school experience. The disciplinary behavioural issues have gone and these kids report feeling more connected, stronger and more resilient. Classroom teachers notice they are more engaged in their learning, with a greater sense of purpose. And it's had a significant impact on other kids. The HOL kids bring a sense of teamwork, responsibility and accountability, to

the other four days a week at school, assuming real leadership, calling others out, and highlighting when other kids let the team down.

It's all about strong relationships and greater trust – the relationship trust built in HOL is transferring back into the classroom – and to other adults and teachers at the school. The HOL students are now more willing to have a go and engage in academic work. The Year 9s in particular are more aspirational and have a greater sense that there is a bright future out there for them."

