

Hands on Learning **e**newsletter

July 2017

HANDS ON LEARNING 
A program supported by Save the Children

JOB READY

“It was either Hands on Learning (HoL) or drop out - so I tried the HoL option.” Beating disengagement and building valuable life skills – not a bad result for Dylan or society...

With new research from Victoria University's Mitchell Institute putting the cost of student disengagement at \$18.8 billion, it's impossible to ignore the need for urgent action.
<http://www.mitchellinstitute.org.au/reports/costs-of-lost-opportunity/>

Hands on Learning alumni like Dylan Sharp illustrate what is possible when schools have access to proven methodology to tackle disengagement proactively and cater for the learning styles of all their students.

Dylan is a second-year apprentice at Frankston Baker's Delight with a huge personality, finely honed teamwork skills and an impressive work ethic, according to his boss, franchisee Ashley Lancaster.

“At the end of the day I'm looking for employees with life skills and emotional intelligence. No matter the profession, you need to get on well with your colleagues and that's all about communication, teamwork and leadership. At Easter we make 7000 hot cross buns in one day – so communication must be spot on and everyone needs to work together as a team.

Dylan's experience in Hands on Learning at McClelland Secondary College set him up brilliantly.

It's impossible not to know what Dylan thinks, he doesn't mind staying back to get the job done, and his patience teaching others is fabulous.

I have no doubt the across-age mentoring, hands on and family nature of Hands on Learning helped Dylan to develop the work readiness skills that have made it possible for him to carve a completely different life trajectory for himself than when he was disengaged and about to drop out of school.”



Welcome

Hands on Learning and Save the Children joined forces on April 1 2017, bringing together HoL's long-term ambition to prevent early school leaving and Save the Children's vision of a world in which every child attains the right to a quality education. Together we will leverage our joint expertise and our local knowledge, and consolidate funding efforts to have greater influence on government policy and the systems that support children.

Right now, only a fraction of the number of students who could benefit from HoL are doing so. We're excited to be part of Save the Children to help us to partner and support more schools, because we know that a quality education is critical to ensuring children have every possible chance in life to reach their potential.

Most significantly, we acknowledge and salute the work of the dedicated artisan-teachers, school leaders, volunteers, philanthropic supporters and community partners who make Hands on Learning possible. Thank you for the difference you make.

School Education Engagement Team





ONGOING SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS

A render and insulation workshop for HoL artisan-teachers at Western Port Secondary College delivers fresh inspiration to local artisan-teachers.

Now part of Save the Children's Australian Programs, our HoL School Support team continues to visit schools, coordinating cluster meetings, data, technical and project support – and constantly fostering the opportunity to share best practice ideas between HoL teams.



INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS

Communities across the globe are increasingly seeking proven methods to tackle student disengagement.

Hands on Learning has proven its efficacy in rural, remote and metropolitan Australian schools – and now in the United Arab Emirates!

Three years after its debut in the UAE in 2014 supported by the Al Qasimi Foundation, it is exciting to watch this Youtube clip and see Hands on Learning in action on the other side of the world... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHtdxmhbJVg>

40%

OF AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS DISENGAGED

With forty per cent of Australian school students disengaged according to a new report from the Grattan Institute <https://grattan.edu.au/report/engaging-students-creating-classrooms-that-improve-learning/> there is a real and urgent for innovation and systemic change to tackle widespread student disengagement in Australian schools.

As a proven solution, Hands on Learning has the potential to make a significant impact.

KEEPING MANY MORE STUDENTS CONNECTED



HEYWOOD & DISTRICT SECONDARY COLLEGE



APOLLO BAY P-12 COLLEGE



WANGANUI PARK
SECONDARY
COLLEGE



WALLAN SECONDARY COLLEGE

Thanks to our generous and committed philanthropic supporters access to Hands on Learning escalated over the last year with 22 new schools introducing HoL to increase attendance, reduce student disengagement and prevent early school leaving.

- APOLLO BAY P-12 COLLEGE
- SURF COAST SECONDARY COLLEGE
- CAMPERDOWN COLLEGE
- COBDEN TECHNICAL SCHOOL
- WARRNAMBOOL WEST PRIMARY SCHOOL
- GRASMERE PRIMARY SCHOOL
- HEYWOOD & DISTRICT SECONDARY COLLEGE
- MANOR LAKES P-12 COLLEGE
- CREEKSIDE COLLEGE
- SPRINGSIDE COLLEGE P-9
- WANGANUI PARK SECONDARY COLLEGE
- CRAIGIEBURN SECONDARY COLLEGE
- WALLAN SECONDARY COLLEGE
- MOUNT CLEAR COLLEGE
- THE PAVILION SCHOOL
- WEEROONA COLLEGE (BENDIGO FLEXIBLE LEARNING OPTIONS CAMPUS)
- DAYLESFORD SECONDARY COLLEGE
- SOUTH GIPPSLAND SPECIALIST SCHOOL
- CRIB POINT PRIMARY SCHOOL
- ROSEBUD PRIMARY SCHOOL
- IPSWICH STATE HIGH SCHOOL (QLD)
- ROSEWOOD STATE HIGH SCHOOL (QLD)

IMPROVING STUDENT OUTCOMES

ATTENDANCE IS THE FIRST STEP

HoL started at Wanganui Park Secondary College in February 2017 with the support of the Goulburn Murray Local Learning and Employment Network (GMLEN).

Tyron went to 14 different primary schools. His family moved around a lot. Last year in Year 7 he hardly went to school in Term 4. This year he hasn't missed a day of Hands on Learning.

The difference according to Tyron is a better feeling in the morning when he wakes up. "Hands on is something you can do, you can help out, and you can do it properly. It's only a little thing, but it makes a big difference to wanting to come to school."

"We get to do work, and build stuff, and don't get told what to do all the time. Last year I just wanted to sleep in a lot. It's more one on one and easier to work with people in Hands on. We all get along. Tuesday is my favourite day because we come over here to HoL – it gets me out of bed and I'm happy to come to school even on the other days now."



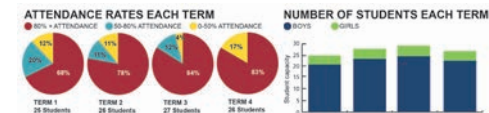
"For some students the first step is motivating them to come to school and increasing attendance. To put it simply; it is impossible to improve literacy and numeracy and educational outcomes when students are not at school regularly."

Principal Ken Murray

Sample Secondary College

Hands on Learning Term 2

Artisan-teachers: Peter Warman and Samantha Norman
Days of Operation: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
Volunteers: Adam Reid



FOCUS ON FOCUS PLANS:

Reflective practice is an important component of the HoL methodology. Focus Plans facilitate reflection and target specific areas of student behaviour. Behavioural change strategies are used as an integral part of Focus Plans enabling students to make important connections between their success in HoL and their overall education outcomes.

Snapshot of key Focus Plans used:

Manai	Develop your practical skills	Ethan	Repeat instructions given to you
Daniel	Keep your work effort going all day	Aaron	Take on leadership with confidence
Joshua	Do as asked as soon as you are asked	Aidan	Encourage others to take on your good work habits
Kyle	Continue to lead by example	Aarush	Make appropriate comments during conversations
Marylee	Remain positive during difficult times	Ike	Show people respect by doing as asked
Noah	Take on new tasks with confidence	Ryan	Avoid getting involved in other people's issues

PROJECTS:

- Pizza Hut construction
- Merbau decking for outdoor theatre space
- Re-furbished kitchen area inside HoL working area
- Installed play equipment at local community playground
- Cement render on earth bag garden walls at local community gardens
- Construction of a sensory activity panels in the primary area of the school
- Building of the sets for the School Production
- Brick pathways

HANDS ON LEARNING
A program supported by Save the Children

MEASURING IMPACT

HOL IS DISTINGUISHED BY ITS DATA COLLECTION AND REGULAR UPDATES TO SCHOOLS MEASURING STUDENT OUTCOMES

EARLY, PROACTIVE AND POWERFUL

Crib Point Primary School is one of 12 schools running a modified version of HoL tailored for younger students to meet a growing demand from principals for proven methodologies to support disengaging middle years students.

"Hands on Learning is helping release hidden talents and giving a mix of children the chance to shine," according to Principal, Tina Coumbe.

"From the school captain to one of the quietest boys in the school, HoL has boosted self-esteem and increased the connection students have with each other.

We had students displaying real disengagement – arriving late, increasing absences, and not enjoying school. We were attracted to HoL because of the

proven methodology and ability to engage parents and the community. Bowens donated timber, Bunnings donated tools, and the team worked hard to recycle all sorts of materials. The kids have displayed a lot of pride in their work - building a concrete couch and a remembrance path at the front of the school.


The results have been fast and distinct – absences have decreased markedly, and self-confidence and sheer enjoyment at school has grown significantly."



"Before HoL I was always quiet in class, I barely even smiled, my teacher has noticed I'm talking more to people and sometimes I'm smiling." **Thomas**

"I used to be super late to school, now I'm coming to school earlier because in HoL you get to do real things." **Brieanna**

"I'm school captain and I've run every assembly this year, including Anzac Day with the Lieutenant commander and six officers from the Navy Base. I wasn't confident before HoL, but I've got much more comfortable with public speaking." **Kayde**

A group of five children are working on a wooden billycart project. Two children are sitting on the billycart in the foreground, wearing blue school uniforms and brown work boots. They are looking towards the camera. Behind them, three other children are standing, also looking towards the camera. They are in a workshop or garage setting with a corrugated metal roof and various tools and materials visible in the background.

EARLY, PROACTIVE AND POWERFUL

LEARNING DOESN'T HAVE TO COME IN THE SAME PACKAGE

Introducing Hands on Learning made a lot of sense for Grasmere Primary School Principal, Warwick Price.

"While school is for everyone, learning does not have to be delivered in the same way for every child. We don't have to use the same 'recipe' every time – everyone does learn slightly differently.

If you focus on the strengths of children and what they can do, rather than weaknesses, you will end up with a successful child, and a successful adult. It's not what they can't do, but what they can do, and most times, simply what they can't do yet.

Hands on Learning tied in beautifully because it has the framework, data, and the rigor that gave me the confidence that it could make a real difference for students at our school."

"We started HoL Term 1 this year with a cross-age group of six students from a student population of 106. Some of our students were missing a lot of school for a whole host of reasons and the program has made a huge impact on them and their families. For most, their attendance has improved dramatically and others now never miss a day, especially Hands on. We recently received a substantial donation from a dad whose child is in the program as he could see the real value of HoL. All students understand that attendance is an important part of the program along with taking the learnings from HoL back into the classroom.

We've set our sights on four areas for 2017 – jobs for our school, for our community, for our HoL Hut, and ourselves. We have already started on the infrastructure for a sensory garden, an all abilities playground for our school, and building billycarts for ourselves. We have been weaving literacy and numeracy into both projects by stealth, with some measurement, along with some science into the push and pull elements of the billycarts."



NEXT STOP CAFE



BUILDING TEAMWORK, CREATIVITY AND ENTERPRISE

In an exciting innovation Springside College P-9 has two Hands on teams – one building crew and one hospitality crew – working together to transform a former Z Class tram into the home for HoL and growing a bustling social enterprise that is developing leadership, collaboration and entrepreneurial skills.

It might be early days but Springside College P-9's HoL teams have big plans. The *Hammerheads* building crew are busy building a picket fence, planning for a deck area outside the tram and rendering chairs from the tram into mosaic couches for future café patrons. The hospitality crew are temporarily operating *The Next Stop* café from the food technology room, opening at recess and lunchtimes on Friday to serve coffees, ice chocolates, homemade slices and sausage rolls, pasta and tacos to students and teachers.

With a waiting list of 30 student referrals there is little doubt this innovative way to

learn is popular with students. "It's the sense of achievement that is an amazing win for these students", Student Welfare Coordinator, Vince Gentile observes.

"I used to be hyped to go to school on a Monday but lose excitement as the week went on as you have to do too much listening to the teacher talking, and you're not doing much yourself, it's the doing that's great in HoL. You have the opportunity to teach others in the group. It's really rewarding. It feels great looking back at your work - we did it - is a proud moment."

Dario, HoL Hammerheads building crew, Year 9



THE GIFT OF JOY

There is no limit to what can be achieved when we work as a team and make a real difference for others.



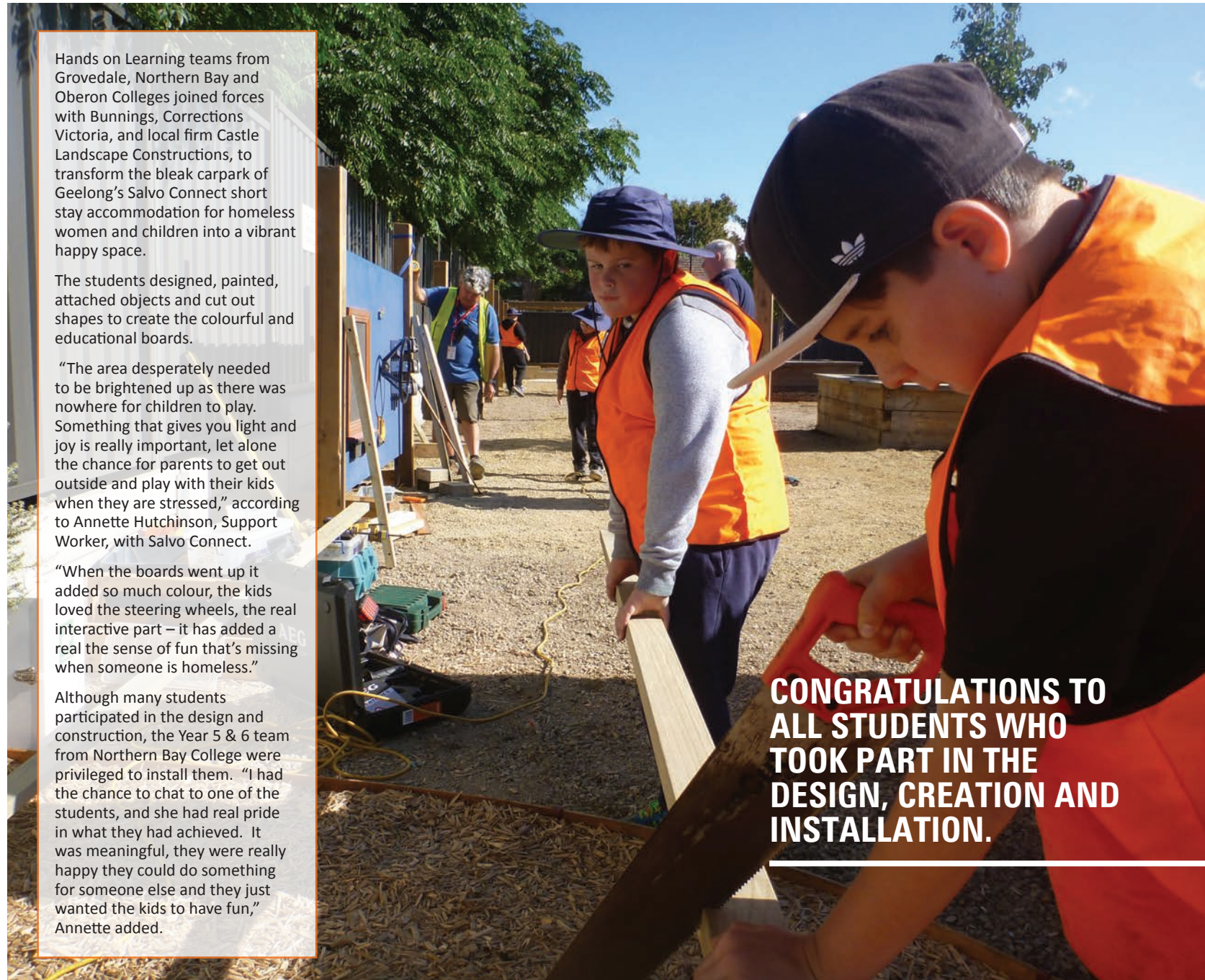
Hands on Learning teams from Grovedale, Northern Bay and Oberon Colleges joined forces with Bunnings, Corrections Victoria, and local firm Castle Landscape Constructions, to transform the bleak carpark of Geelong's Salvo Connect short stay accommodation for homeless women and children into a vibrant happy space.

The students designed, painted, attached objects and cut out shapes to create the colourful and educational boards.

"The area desperately needed to be brightened up as there was nowhere for children to play. Something that gives you light and joy is really important, let alone the chance for parents to get out outside and play with their kids when they are stressed," according to Annette Hutchinson, Support Worker, with Salvo Connect.

"When the boards went up it added so much colour, the kids loved the steering wheels, the real interactive part – it has added a real the sense of fun that's missing when someone is homeless."

Although many students participated in the design and construction, the Year 5 & 6 team from Northern Bay College were privileged to install them. "I had the chance to chat to one of the students, and she had real pride in what they had achieved. It was meaningful, they were really happy they could do something for someone else and they just wanted the kids to have fun," Annette added.



CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL STUDENTS WHO TOOK PART IN THE DESIGN, CREATION AND INSTALLATION.

REALISING POTENTIAL

Hands on Learning continues to make a big difference keeping students connected to school and helping them realise their potential.



Nathan (pictured left) started HoL in Year 7, with his HoL artisan-teacher Ian (centre) and Aaron who started in Year 8, of FCJ College in Benalla.

Now Year 12 students, both found being part of Hands on Learning broke up the school week, making learning easier and helping them stay in school. For Nathan the difference was all about “getting the chance to do things and make things rather than just sitting in class, and the smaller group was like a work environment.”



Isaac was part of HoL team at St Francis Xavier College for Years 8 and 9. His mum Fiona is still pinching herself at where he is now after being disengaged at school. She recently wrote to HoL artisan-teacher Al Grigg to thank him. “I just love it that the school is trying to take care of every student. So many kids learn differently and have different skills, and in our increasingly academic world that means too many kids are disengaging.”

Dear Allan,

Just wanted to share some exciting news in regards to our son Isaac. He has just successfully completed his three month trial as an apprentice welder at a business creating custom made kitchens. He is enjoying it and loves his new direction in life. Thank you for giving Isaac the opportunities and self belief in your fantastic HoL program. You and SFX have assisted in helping him find his way beyond the classroom and Dene and myself will be forever grateful for this. Your program is fantastic and we realise that it is in high demand. It has been invaluable to Isaac. Thank you for the time, patience and belief you had in Isaac, we are just so pleased and proud he has entered a trade that he loves, so thanks again I will be emailing school also.

Kind regards,
Fiona Missen