

HANDS ON LEARNING

A program supported by Save the Children



**CELEBRATING
2018**

BROOKSIDE
COLLEGE

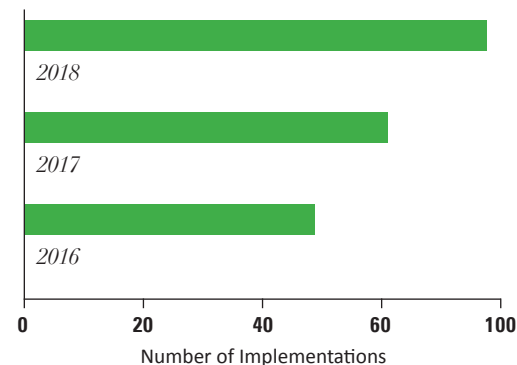


Save the Children®



Growth – Strategic goal realised

We are on track to realise our strategic goal of growing HoL into 100 implementation sites by the end of 2018/19 - cementing HoL as Australia's preeminent onsite targeted intervention to prevent early school leaving.



Don't miss the latest @handsonlearn

Keen to hear about the latest projects and achievements of Hands on Learning students? Follow us on Twitter @handsonlearn and help us share and celebrate the way HoL students are discovering their talents and experiencing success.



Thank you

It's been a very big year in the world of Hands on Learning (HoL) and we warmly and sincerely thank our valued supporters and school partners who make the sustainability and development of greater access to HoL possible.

During 2018 we celebrated phenomenal growth and demand, and the beginning of the scaling of Hands on Learning from Victoria into schools in Tasmania, Queensland and New South Wales.

The year began with Hands on Learning on centre stage at Melbourne's Parliament House with a week-long showcase in March, included our biggest ever national conference at the Footscray Community Arts Centre in June, and hit November with the new HoL café nominated by Finish global not for profit HundrED as one of the top 100 global education innovations.

Accountability and measurement is at the heart of our methodology and clearly demonstrated in the 2018 aggregated student outcomes captured in the update that follows. We encourage you to read the testimonials of parents and we look forward to early 2019 and the release of the results of our first survey of Hands on Learning parents capturing the perspective of this key stakeholder on the impact of Hands on Learning.

We close the year inspired by school leaders increasingly determined to cater for the diverse learning needs of their students, the corresponding investment of our partner schools in HoL in 2018 and the evidence that Australian students want to learn practical skills. In short the more real we can make it, the more kids engage, learn and succeed.

Thank you for your support.

School Education Engagement Team

LATEST RESEARCH

Students desperate to learn more practical and life skills

Australian students want to learn more practical life skills at school according to the national survey of 1001 students from every state and territory released by UNICEF Australia in November 2018.

With Australia in the bottom third of 41 high income countries on education equality and the Gonski Review highlighting academic performance in Australia has declined since 2000, UNICEF completed a national survey of school students to understand the factors contributing to our poor educational outcomes and international ranking, deciding to communicate with the most important stakeholders – students themselves.

School students between the ages of 14 and 16 were surveyed about their experiences of Australian education revealing students think secondary education in Australia is too focused on training students to pass exams and assignments. Students want more “practical skills” to be taught at high school - those that will benefit them in life once schooling has finished:

- One fifth of students (21%) feel their education is lacking in relevant “practical” skills that will be of benefit to them in life after they leave school.
- Half of all students (51%) said they would like to learn more practical recruitment skills for getting a job.
- Exactly half said they wanted to learn more practical on-the-job skills.



STEP ONE **A place to belong**

Inspired by the vision of artisan-teachers Matt and Aaron at Noble Park Secondary College, the HoL team has made fast progress developing their own space. Recycling whenever possible, they installed a new wall to divide the school's former automotive shed in two, and followed quickly with a workbench along that wall, complete with storage underneath. At the same time, they have almost completed lining the shed with insulation and recycled materials. Most recently they dug the post holes, and almost completed an outdoor deck and plan to install bi-fold windows to open-up the space next year.



HITTING THE GROUND **RUNNING**

Hands on Learning started at Noble Park Secondary College in May. An inspiring example of what can be achieved in seven months.

Building belonging

For Assistant Principal Peter Jeans it's simply about keeping students connected to school. "We really needed something to target disengagement in Years 7, 8 and 9. Something early and something at the school to build belonging and connection. It's all about giving the students new strategies and focus back in class, and supporting them to develop as people by fostering the leadership, communication and teamwork skills that will set them up for school, work and life."



STEP TWO **People to belong to**

Small teams clad in high visibility gear working together, sharing meals and building strong relationships is at the heart of Hands on Learning and the centerpiece is always a table to gather around. Not just any table. At Noble Park the team have fashioned a stunning table from recycled timber, that is not only a testament to their talent and hard work, but a great way to communicate and share meals together.



STEP THREE **Real things to do**

A new way to learn and real things to do has had an incredible impact on Year 9 student Blair. "Before HoL I had trouble with written work, so I only came to school a couple of days a week. In class we sit in row by row and the teacher is the only one talking. Here if anyone has an idea they can put it out there, and if it's suitable it will get done. It's the kind of learning that motivates me to turn up to school."



STEP FOUR **Giving back**

With their own space well underway, the team have plans next year to venture out into the school grounds to lend a hand and undertake projects ranging from building a gazebo to general landscaping and gardening.



SUCCESS AND SELF-ESTEEM THROUGH THE ROOF

Surf Coast College's team transformed an old shipping container into their HoL base, built an impressive outdoor classroom, and made vegetable boxes for the local kinder, demonstrating just how wellbeing and belonging is a critical bedrock to learning.

"Hands on Learning helps build students' social capital in a way that is not always possible in the classroom," according to Surf Coast College Principal Scott Diamond. "Our students are really proud of what they have achieved, their self-esteem has gone through the roof, and they are a lot happier."

These kids value the opportunity to help others, and they have benefited from the work-like responsibilities in HoL. Most importantly, we are seeing the results back in the classroom. The key to this success is twofold: First it is the quality of our artisan-teachers, their skill in building relationships and respect with students, and their training in the HoL methodology."

"It is also obvious that HoL is no flash in the pan. There is a measurable level of accountability and data collection. It's a proven methodology with a 20-year-long evidence base that has the framework and scaffolding, with the runs on the board, to actually work."

"It's really quite simple. We need programs that are built for the diversity of learners. And if we want to lift literacy, numeracy and academic performance - wellbeing, school connection and belonging come first," the school's wellbeing leader Peter Raidme added. "It's education 101. Students need to be happy at school and if they are happy they will be better learners."



Surf Coast College's ten fast and easy steps to building a HoL Hut:

1. Secure budget and have shipping container delivered to school
2. Steel fabricator cuts windows and door space, and local manufacturer donates excess windows
3. Sand and paint exterior of shipping container
4. Install windows and sliding door
5. Add stud walls, insulation and clad walls in plywood
6. Add feature wall of reclaimed timber and install ceiling
7. Add frames to doors and windows, put floor in
8. Install old kitchen donated from another school
9. Build a deck
10. Craft a work table, bench seat, stools and add red gum sleeper shelving

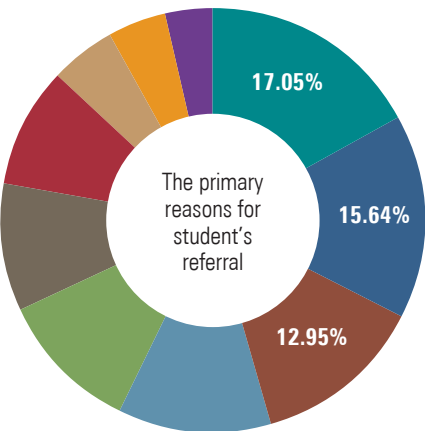


STUDENT OUTCOMES 2018

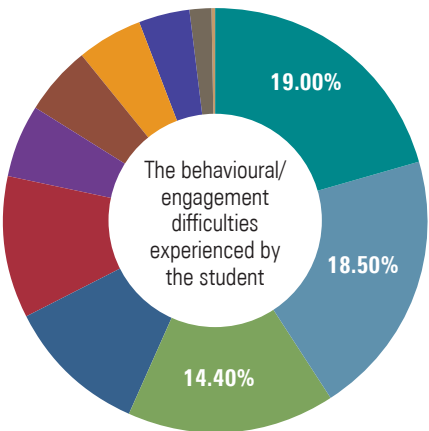
Student referral patterns

Students are referred to Hands on Learning for a variety of reasons. At the time of referral information is collected on the main reasons for the student's referral and behavioural/engagement difficulties experienced by the student.

The aggregated data for 2018 includes a representation of mainstream, specialist, primary, secondary, rural and metropolitan schools. Please note some referral forms had more than 1 response selected for each question.



- Withdrawn (socially) = 17.05%
- Interest in trade skills = 15.64%
- Need for their education program to be enhanced = 12.95%
- Disrupts classroom environment = 11.77%
- Withdrawn (academically) = 10.86%
- Disinterested in learning = 9.64%
- Attention seeking behaviours = 9.41%
- Other = 4.82%
- Aggressive (verbally) = 4.55%
- Aggressive (physically) = 3.45%



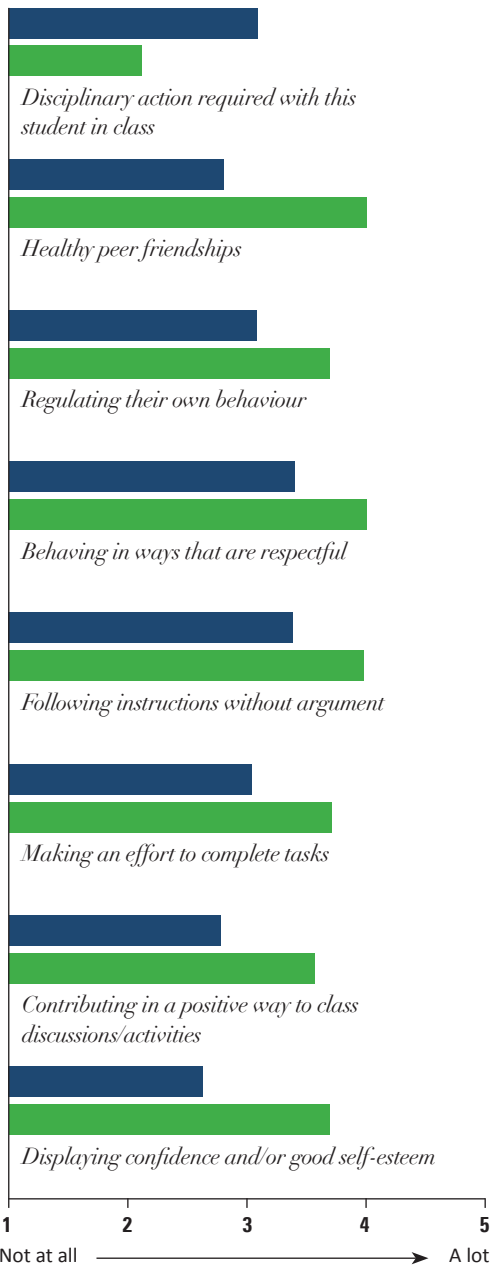
- Learning difficulties = 19.00%
- Low literacy/numeracy = 18.50%
- Sporadic school attendance = 14.40%
- Significant trauma = 9.85%
- Unable to sustain friendships = 9.80%
- Victim of bullying = 5.25%
- School refusal (non attendance) = 4.75%
- Perpetrator of bullying = 4.65%
- History of suspension = 3.55%
- PSD = 1.45%
- Other = 0.09%

Teachers rate the impact of HoL

Teachers have provided information about students' level of engagement and motivation in the classroom prior to joining Hands on Learning (HoL), and after participation in the program for a duration of three school terms. The graphs below highlight the strength of HoL in helping students develop practical strategies they can deploy back in the classroom. HoL empowers students to shift behaviours that have become barriers to learning. Through participation in the HoL program, students are equipped with the transferable skills they need to not only experience success at school, but throughout future training and employment endeavours.

Teachers completed a survey prior to the student commencing HoL and then again after 6-8 months of attendance.

● PRE HoL ● POST HoL

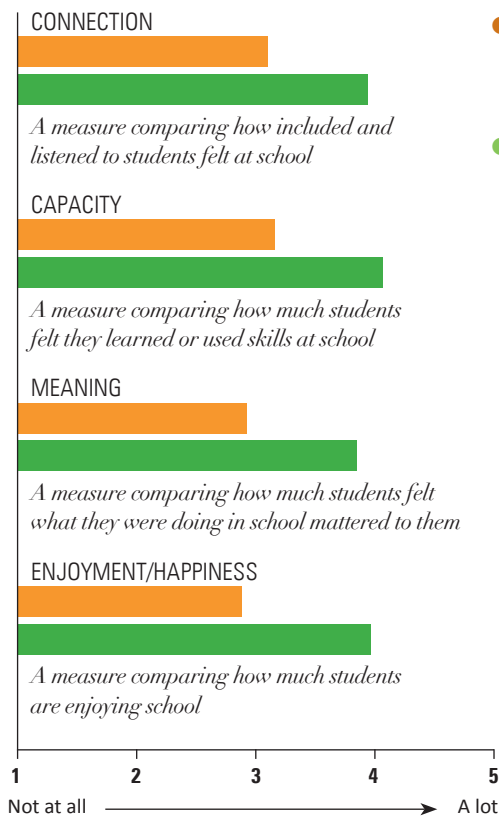


STUDENT OUTCOMES 2018

Connection, Capacity and Meaning

Although most students cope well in the typical classroom, there are many who struggle and fail to thrive at school. This is why HoL is first and foremost about providing an enabling space for these young people, giving them the support they need to build friendships and stay connected, develop their skills and capacities, and find a sense of meaning and purpose to the tasks undertaken at school.

The Connections, Capacities and Meanings (CCM) framework used here emerged from our participation in a world first Australian Research Council/University of Melbourne project looking to find a way to more accurately measure the impact of programs like HoL that seek to help young people stay connected to school.



Capabilities

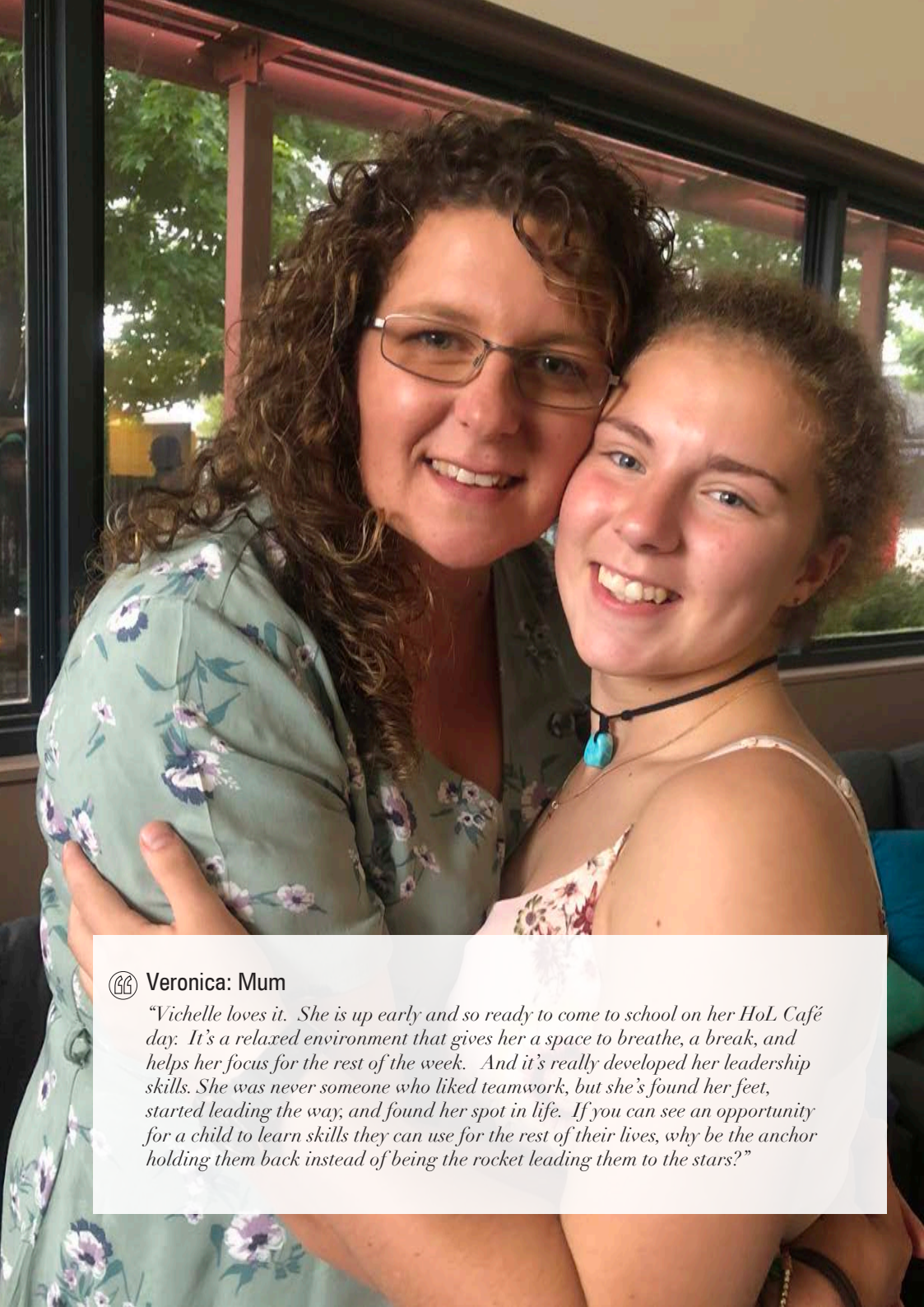
Hands on Learning (HoL) provides a practical environment for students to develop personal and social capabilities and the enterprise skills to succeed at school, and in future education and employment.

‘Preparing young people for the world of work’ (Mitchell Institute March 2017), a policy roundtable report of education practitioners, government leaders, policy specialists and researchers from across Australia, highlights the capabilities that will enable young people to thrive in the complex education and employment settings of the future, including: *critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, curiosity, interpersonal and communication skills, self-regulation, grit, entrepreneurial skills, teamwork and craftsmanship.*

Students completed a survey prior to commencing HoL and then again after 6-8 months of attendance.

● PRE HoL ● POST HoL





WHAT DO PARENTS SAY?

What parents think works to keep their children engaged at school..

Many studies document the views of students and teachers, but the absence of the parent voice about student engagement is a notable gap in the literature according to a 2015 report prepared for the Commissioner for Children and Young people WA by the University of Western Australia (2015).

There is overwhelming agreement about the importance of parents to the educational experience and engagement of their children, but an absence of direct studies of parent views. If parent perspectives on student engagement were sought, what would they say? What do they think is needed to improve student outcomes? We have captured a snapshot from families at HoL celebration events this year and look forward to early 2019 and the release of our first survey of Hands on Learning parents encapsulating the perspective of this key stakeholder on the impact of Hands on Learning.



Janine: Mum

"Lily had behavior issues at school that have really settled down now. She looks forward to Tuesday. It's like a big family. She's a really different person after her day in HoL because she is happy."



Melinda: Mum

"We are not all the same, some kids learn in different ways. This is a chance to break up the school week and it's the reason Riley gets up and out of bed and comes to school. Without HoL he wouldn't be here. These people that run Hands on Learning here get the best out of the children."

Veronica: Mum

"Vichelle loves it. She is up early and so ready to come to school on her HoL Café day. It's a relaxed environment that gives her a space to breathe, a break, and helps her focus for the rest of the week. And it's really developed her leadership skills. She was never someone who liked teamwork, but she's found her feet, started leading the way, and found her spot in life. If you can see an opportunity for a child to learn skills they can use for the rest of their lives, why be the anchor holding them back instead of being the rocket leading them to the stars?"



Adam: Dad

"HoL gives kids a really good idea of what work life is like. It's the initiative, the problem solving, the strong work ethic. I see lots of young guys on site that don't have a good work ethic and spend more time on their phone. They learn life and work skills in HoL and they're really valuable."



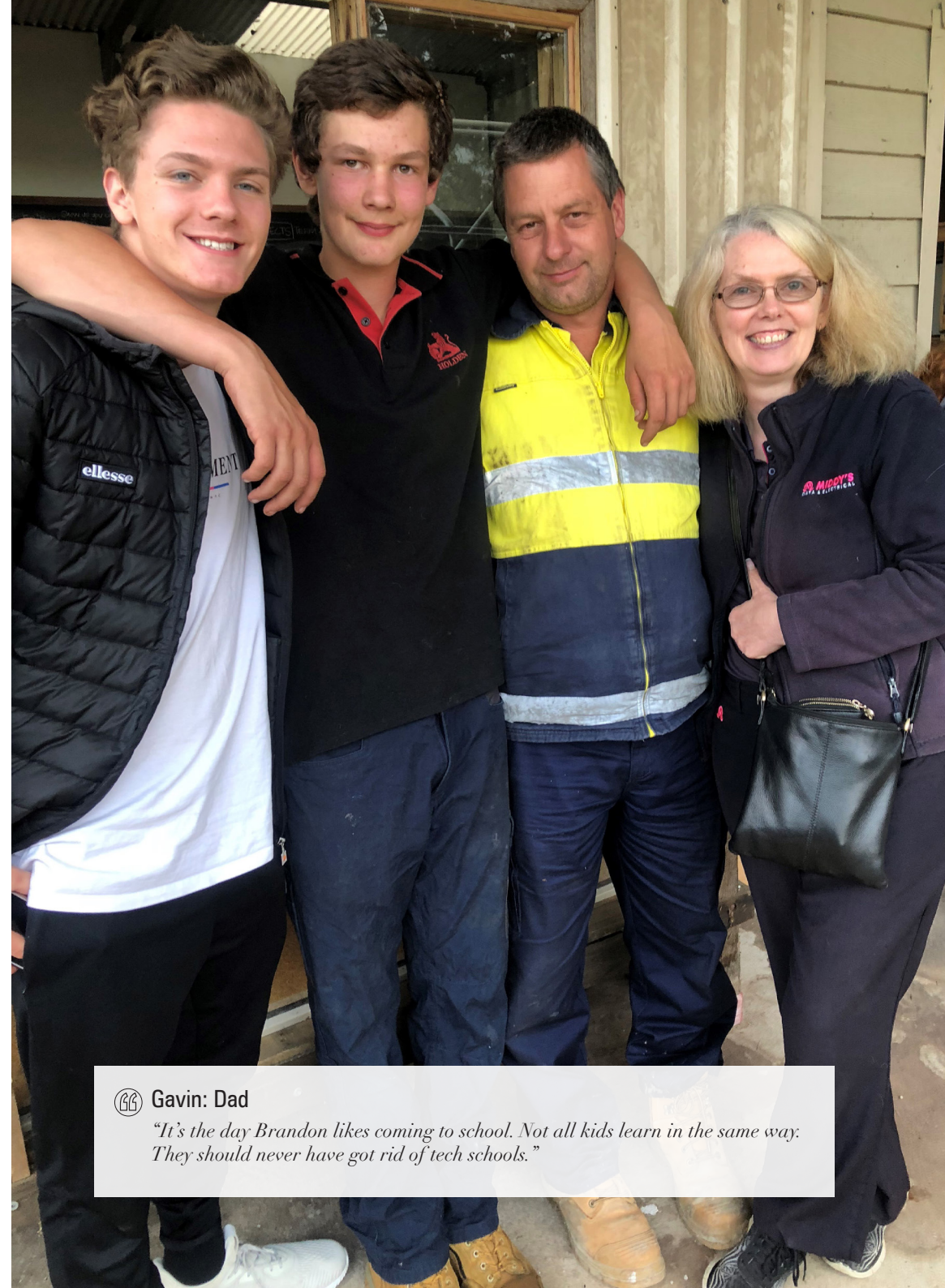
Merran: Mum

"Kaitlyn feels like they understand how she learns down here. In English she feels like the words go in one ear and out the other and she struggles to retain information. It is great to see her more relaxed, expressing herself and planning what she can do next."



Jamie: Dad

"Lily absolutely loves the cooking and working with the others and her confidence has just grown. She is so happy."



Gavin: Dad

"It's the day Brandon likes coming to school. Not all kids learn in the same way. They should never have got rid of tech schools."



Mel: Mum

"Hands on Learning has helped both my kids stay at school longer.

Brooke wouldn't have finished year 10 without HoL. She had stopped coming to school for a whole term until HoL motivated her to start coming again. For Brooke it took away the stress of the classroom. In HoL kids get a chance to learn by their mistakes and without her even realizing it, in HoL they learn Maths, English and life time skills. The classroom doesn't teach teamwork, but in HoL decisions need to be made as a group. Every school should have HoL because some kids learn better by 'doing it' and they don't get that opportunity in the classroom.

Mitch was disruptive in class, too much talking. HoL helped Mitch with communication, leadership and teamwork. He learnt to take instructions, as well as give instructions, and he got to feel that he could add his thoughts into the mix. The difference between HoL and class is that in HoL everyone gets to speak, everyone is on the same level – there's no 'I'm at the top of this mountain'. Everyone's equal in HoL.

Mitch sums it up best "It's easier to be a physical learner than writing it in a book. I wouldn't be at school without HoL."



Agron: Dad and Angie: Mum

"Leon has been in HoL for two years. He is active and always keen to help out and they tell us he often leads the team and 'works like ten men'. We don't know what Leon's education would have been like without HoL. He has trouble focusing and was having troubles in class. The reports back from teachers now are positive and really encouraging about how he is doing in class. The day in HoL, especially as it's a Wednesday, gives him a break from the demands of class. He can work hard for two days, enjoy HoL, and then tackle another two days. That's helped him cope and improve in class and given him skills and direction for the future."



Abedin: Dad and Linda: Mum

"Ameera is in Grade 6 and started HoL café this year. She was having difficulty at school and not wanting to attend. Life has changed from battling to get her to school at least twice a week to it now being a pleasure waking her up because she wants to go. Ameera is on us now to get her to school early on a Tuesday as she can't be late for the café. She is so much happier. It's given us our daughter back. She has gained a lot of confidence. She likes all school more. The day in the café gives her a break from the classroom structure which enables her to cope and thrive at school now."



Ingenious garden settings

At Frankston High School the students transformed pallets into these magnificent lightweight garden settings. All done with careful measuring, good design, and attention to detail. A great lesson in geometry.



Stylish kitchen

These benchtops and cupboards, once part of an old deck and fencing, now a stylish kitchen! All part of Elizabeth Murdoch College's maintenance shed to HoL hut conversion.



THE MAGIC OF RECYCLING

HoL teams demonstrate the beauty in repurposing is that there's no limit to creativity

According to HoL Founder Russell Kerr, a positive approach to recycling and a determination to discover the treasure in everything has been a core value in HoL since its inception.

"Our culture of recycling building materials and repurposing them into wonderful and varied projects is driven by three main factors:

- recognising the need to conserve natural resources in a throwaway world.
- a discipline of operating with very small budgets constrained expenditure on new materials.
- the abundance of willing labour at hand to reclaim old materials.

This history of salvaging old things and giving them a new beginning is closely aligned to our core purpose of spotting

the potential of young people passed over by a school system that values conformity and results in a narrow paradigm. Many of these students were cast aside because they didn't fit in or have the right attributes to succeed at that point in their lives.

So here we have the two materials we are working with - the old timber and the young lives. Our artisan-teachers discover that both these elements show signs of damage, neglect and fragility that require our craftsmen to work skillfully not only with their hands, but with their hearts as well, to gently transform those rough and damaged parts. As with any work of art, this cannot be rushed and requires great care. So here is a synergy in our work, simultaneously the artisan-teachers are discovering along with their students the unique qualities that lie within each person who may so easily have been passed over as waste."



Stunning hardwood

Have a look at what Somerville Secondary HoL students, staff and volunteers have made this term. The team needed a table to fit 12 people to sit around. They started with a donated leaf type table with old style legs that could only fit 6 people around, along with some donated roof trusses from Bowns that they pulled apart. Working together they constructed an extended top, frame and legs. With cutting-board pads under the legs and lots of planing, sanding, sawing, measuring, polishing and hard work they created this magnificent table.

JOB READY TEAMWORK

Queensland schools embrace learning by doing

HoL is flourishing in Queensland. Ipswich and Rosewood State High schools started in 2017, with Beenleigh, Lowood and Laidley State High Schools introducing HoL in Term 4, 2018.

The most exciting news is the speed that the HoL teams in Queensland have moved to give back and contribute to their school and community.



Laidley State High School

“Hands on Learning is unique in the way it meets our real need to get in earlier to support disengaging students in years 7,8 and 9, build confidence, and set junior students up for more success in their senior years. The support from Save the Children has just been outstanding. Our School Support Manager checks in regularly and was able to step in with on the ground support one week after a particularly challenging day. Too often these kind of programs sound like a good idea, but the nature of the challenges some students are facing means it’s a hard slog that can wear staff out. HoL has been able to share ideas and strategies from what’s happening in other schools that you just wouldn’t have access to when you are working in isolation at your own school.”

Anthony Pickett, Deputy Principal, Laidley State High School



Beenleigh State High School

“Every day counts with school attendance and when a student doesn’t feel like they belong, they are not going to come or achieve. Our kids see the day in Hands on Learning as a real positive. A day they actually want to be at school. It really helps us build a sense of belonging – when they are doing things around the school to make it a better place they really feel like they belong. There’s definitely a sense of excitement and pride when they finish each project. HoL is great for the physical kinesthetic learners who find it much harder to demonstrate their value and feel valued in some classes, but have such a strong sense of that value and belonging in Hands on Learning.”

Damien Ricketts, HOD – Engagement, Beenleigh State High School



Lowood State High School

“Our students are really engaged in the HoL program. We joined the team for lunch last week and it gave me goosebumps to see the pride the students were taking in the projects they have completed around the school. We had conversations with students who just weeks ago would have struggled to say hello, that were now first to talk about what they had been doing and share their own ideas for next year and what they can achieve. I can’t say enough positive things about Hands on Learning at this stage.”

Sherree Soanes, Deputy Principal, Lowood State High School

🗨️ **Anon: Year 6**

"Since I've been doing it, I've not been so angry. I never worked in class before I did Hands on Learning. I can now do what I'm told to do."

🗨️ **Mitch: Grade 6**

"I now work harder. I work harder at building stuff. I used to have some dodgy behaviour – I've got less now."

🗨️ **Xavier: Year 6**

"It's made my life better as I can build stuff and make stuff. I used to mess around with my friends in class, now I don't do this as much."

🗨️ **Jaxon: Year 6**

"Before I did Hands on Learning, I had no friends. Now I have friends. It's fun."

🗨️ **Ryan: Year 6**

"Taught me new skills. Helped me to not be naughty. Gives me a focus to be here and a reason."

🗨️ **Lucas: Year 6**

"Changed the way I work. Now I work really hard. I sort of work hard in class too. It's been good for my life."

🗨️ **Chaz: Year 6**

"Helped me in class. Done what I'm told here. Helps me to do what I'm told in class. It feels good. I haven't been suspended since last term."



A NATURAL SYNERGY

Demand from Tasmania grows

Huonville and East Devonport Primary schools started Hands on Learning in 2018 and success has been instantaneous. HoL is just a natural fit in Tasmania. It's a stunning environment and the students readily embrace the opportunity to get outside and get 'hands on' at school. And the momentum is growing in the 'Apple Isle' with three new secondary schools starting HoL in early 2019.

🗨️ **Cheyenne: Year 6**

"I just can't focus on maths in class. I'm good at doing maths when it's real like here, just not when it's in class. I just don't focus because why would those circumstances come about that I'd have 10 apples? The maximum apples I'd ever have would be one or two. Doing HoL on Wednesdays made me want to come to school, because if I come for the whole week I have something to look forward to in the middle."

🗨️ **Amali: Year 5**

"The fantastic thing is getting to work outside."

🗨️ **Zane: Year 5**

"It is great to get a break. It gets very frustrating in class. Doing this can give you a chance to let your anger out on fun stuff like painting, hammering and cooking."

A GREAT LEAP **FORWARDS**

Big impact

A special group of students at Pakenham Consolidated School have made big changes to their world this year. Classroom teachers are noticing shifts in behaviour, engagement and attitude, and the striking outdoor classroom, pizza oven brickwork, and picnic table they have built are solid testaments to the skills they have developed and just how much they can achieve as a team.

“We have seen an improvement in behaviour across the board. Some students needed extra help academically, some needed to build their social and emotional skills, and some were frequent refusers of school work, walking out of classrooms, having constant issues in the yard, or quietly managing to get by without completing any set work. Classes were disrupted frequently last year – greatly affecting the rest of the cohort. Students in the Hands on Project (HoP) averaged nine suspensions last year, with some yet to even receive one this year.”

Sally Dawson, Year 3-6 Coordinator, HoP Coordinator, Leading Teacher Numeracy

Mason: Year 6

“I do my work a lot better because I’m not drained. HoP teaches you how to work with other people and gives you great teamwork skills. When we are building this pizza oven some people get the bricks, some mix the concrete and some of us lay the bricks.”

Zoran: Year 6

“Doing this makes me have a good day. It feels satisfying to see what you have built, and it calms me when I get that feeling when I am doing it. I’ve gone from heaps of timeouts and suspensions last year down to one this year. It just makes me feel good doing HoP. It makes me feel happy because I’m not always missing out on what’s happening in class anymore and feeling behind and dumb.”

Ryan: Year 6

“It helps me a lot with my learning. I used to find it hard to read and write. In here they are not judging me, but helping me. I got asked to talk about our HoP projects and what we are doing to the School Council. I still can’t believe I did it.”





REAL CAMARADERIE

In less than one term, six Upwey Primary School students have brightened up the school playground with a pirate ship makeover, and developed a real teamwork ethos that is paying dividends in the way they socialize and with peers, and feel about school.

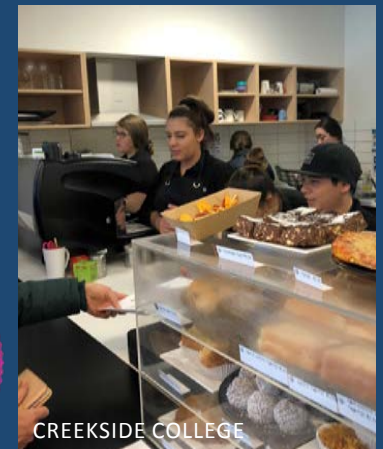
Violet: Year 6

"It's fun to stop doing school work for a while and help around the school. Sometimes you just need a break."

Aaliyah: Year 5

"I like working with people that aren't in my friend group because when you go to high school or at work you can't pick who you do jobs with. It gives me more confidence to work with other people. When we started if someone asked if I needed help I'd say no. I've gotten used to compromising, and if there's one thing two people want to do now, I've learnt how to work it out so that both people are happy."

HoL CAFÉ SELECTED FOR THE **hundrED** 2019 COLLECTION



"Spreading innovations such as Hands on Learning Café across borders can be a gamechanger for education, worldwide."

Saku Tuominen, CEO of HundrED

In the entrepreneurial HoL Café program, students establish a café either in an existing school site or in a purpose-built space like a modified shipping container, catering to the needs of their peers, staff and the school community. All profit generated goes back into the HoL Cafe to support the sustainability of the program. Students obtain recognised qualifications by doing Barista and Safe Food Handling courses, develop skills in marketing, budgeting and fundraising, and authentically enhance their capacity in problem solving, communication, collaboration, project management and organisation.