



DISCO
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DISCO Beat!

'Partnering Schools, Linking with Business, Supporting Youth'

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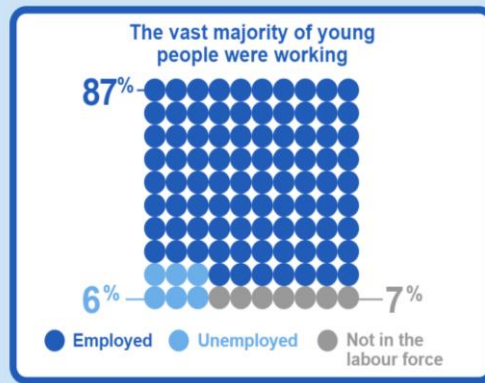
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Mike's Column

Generation Z – Growing Up and Building a Future

The Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) follow young Australians from the age of 15 up until they are 25, exploring young people's experiences as they leave school, begin post-school study, and enter the workforce.

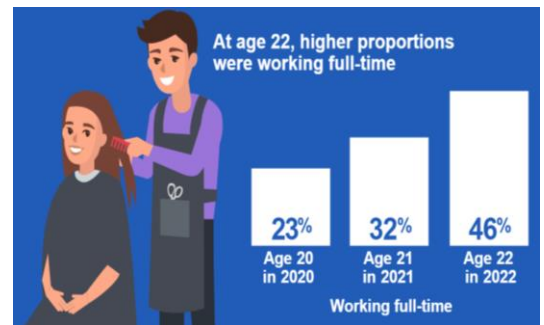
Generation Z: life at 22 brings together information from LSAY participants who commenced the program when they were 15 years old in 2015. Using findings from their interviews in 2022, we can look at their engagement with study and work and how this has changed over time. We also explore their levels of financial stress, mental health, and satisfaction with life and how this compares with 22-year-olds in 2016.



Impressively, as the table shows, a very high proportion of young men and women are engaged in work, and we all know this number has been increasing as a result of the shortage of low skilled and semi-skilled workers in Australia.

At DISCO we are continuing to witness strong demand across employment sectors with many businesses running short of workers.

It is also obvious in the research that young people are linking into full time work sooner which reflects the opportunities being presented to commence work and get a career underway and they may do this while continuing to study with many first year University students also holding down a full-time job.



To learn more about the findings and what they mean for businesses why not visit the LSAY website at: <https://www.lsay.edu.au/publications/search-for-lsay-publications/generation-z-life-at-22>

Dalby Office Wins Award

After a number of years nominating, the Dalby office finally succeeded in winning the Education, Employment & Training Category at the Dalby Chamber of Commerce & Industry Business Excellence Awards.

Members of the Dalby and Toowoomba team were able to be at the Awards evening to celebrate this achievement.

The DISCO Management Committee & I are very proud of the efforts of the Dalby team and their long and consistent performance supporting the Southwest. Led by Le-Anne, this dedicated group are widely known and respected for the wonderful work that they do. We feel this is a very deserving win and congratulate them all on their success.



Mike Paton - CEO

Quote in the Corner

'Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything' –

George Bernard Shaw

Gatton Update

After a well-deserved break, Jenna and I returned to work ready to continue working with the last few of our 2023 clients aiming to help them gain employment. We were extremely proud of all sixteen students having 100% of them successfully complete their *Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways*. Not only did these students complete their certificates, fifteen of the sixteen had a positive outcome whether it was work, study or returning to school.

We finished the year with a strong waitlist & attempted to contact over twenty possible candidates to interview for our semester one group in 2024. Once the interviews were complete, we were happy to accept eight students who attended an induction day where all the students & parents/guardians were able to meet each other.

We spent most of January planning for the year ahead organising activities, lesson plans and guest speakers to fill our days.

Our GSFW group commenced on the 5th of February and during this short time friendships and bonds have blossomed. We spent a week getting to know each other and then jumped straight into unit work, personal development, goal setting, our industry focus for the years and starting to talk about what it means to work in a team. It hasn't been all work, we managed to squeeze in a trip to the park, a BBQ, a game of Kubb's, trivia, gardening, cooking and a couple of art sessions.

We have spent time down at the Lockyer Community Centre volunteering & are look forward to working with them again.

DISCO'S Youth Employment Support Program Coordinator, Dana joins us on a Thursday and continues to support her Lockyer Valley clients.

We have already locked in some community events and will be attending the Lockyer Valley Youth Week Exp which will be held at Laidley on the 10th of April and will also be attending the Faith Lutheran Careers Expo.



Kim Stevens and Jenna Perrett – Gatton team

Youth Employment Support - YES

It has been a very busy first quarter of 2024 and we couldn't be more excited for what the rest of the year has in store for us! We welcomed our newest team member Madison Campbell who has been employed as a Youth Employment Support Officer. Madison is fitting in well and has begun working with some of her own young people and it has been amazing to see the bonds she has developed with them already in such a short amount of time. We really think Madison is going to smash her goals and the goals of the program in 2024! The YES Program saw many young people reaching out to us early to get support and get ahead of their yearly goals which has been amazing to see the program start off strong for another year. Through the YES Program, participants have been able to acquire an individualised support service where we have been able to work collaboratively together to identify their goals, visions, and a plan of execution. The support has been all one-on-one which has allowed us to really get to know each young person and work together to build their work readiness skills for the future. Participants have been able to build their skills in professional resume and cover letter writing, job searching and cold canvassing, interview preparation and performance, and career planning. Participants have also emphasised early on that they seek to upskill their abilities which has been amazing to see considering how significant upskilling is in the modern job market. This has ultimately led to supporting young people in exploring training opportunities that will aid in their journey to achieving their employment and career goals.

The YES Program is expected to grow further post our annual School Leaver Program calls that we conduct in March each year and I have already seen a positive response from the 2023 Grade 12 graduates. Maddy and I are meeting with many new, bright, and motivated young people who are ready to take the next steps towards their careers. This has ultimately allowed me to become more present in the Gatton and Dalby regions, alongside building new relationships with changing staff in schools across the region.

If you, or someone you know, might benefit from the program, please don't hesitate to contact me via mobile on 0457 871 530 or via email at dana@disco.org.au.



Dana Sallway –
YES Coordinator



DISCO is proudly supported by the QLD Government.



Queensland Government

Welcome to 2024!

I would like to welcome back Lara Smith in the role of Get Set for Work Co-ordinator for our 2024 program. I am very excited by the program Lara has put together for this year. Our first Get Set for Work program for 2024 commenced on the 12th of February with eight participants and a late starter commencing the following Monday. These young people are participating in career development, personal development, trade days and healthy lifestyles workshops whilst also completing a *Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways*.

We are very excited to partner with Bunnings this year to present workshops in horticulture and construction to our young people.

We are also joining forces with local industry representatives, apprenticeship organisations and community support workers who will educate this group on the services they offer. This jam-packed program will graduate on the 13th of June with our second program for the year commencing mid-July. We are already receiving referrals and expressions of interest for our next program.

Dana Sallway works in the Dalby office one day a week on the Ready for Work program, supporting 15 – 24-year-olds. The program assists young people to transition into the workforce by providing them with the practical skills they need to successfully find work. Ready for Work is a short program (up to 6–8 sessions duration) targeting young job seekers that lack the skills and/or knowledge to find employment.

If employed through our Get Set for Work or Ready for Work programs, we can support employers in ensuring the young person becomes a valuable member of their team. We are also able to advise employers of possible funding incentives available (and who they can contact to discuss eligibility requirements) to help with the costs of training these young people.

If you have any questions regarding any of our programs, please do not hesitate to contact the Dalby office on 4662 2147.

Le-Anne Callaghan

Southwest Qld Area Manager & Dalby Site Manager

DISCO / Aurora Partnership

DISCO is pleased to be continuing its partnership with the Aurora Training Institute. This partnership enables clients from either organisation to connect and work collaboratively on activities decided to educate and prepare them for work and a career.

If you'd like to know more pop into a DISCO office or the Aurora Training Institute in Annand St in Toowoomba to learn more.



What a great start we have had for 2024 and a wonderful finish to 2023!

In 2023 we supported 35 young people at James Street in our Get Set for Work Program. 34 received their *Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways* with one Statement of Attainment. 25 of those young people entered the workforce or went on to do further study. We continue to support many others who are edging closer to employment or study. The team are so proud of all our young people's efforts in 2023.

We had a long waitlist for our first semester in 2024 which meant many interviews were conducted from October through until January. We chose 19 young people who we believe were the best fit for the Get Set for Work Program. DISCO is not always the right fit for the young people we choose and at times we have some drop out in the early weeks however all 19 are committed to the program and have enjoyed their first 5 weeks. We have a large number of girls which can sometimes bring different challenges however all are eager to get in and get work done, with some singing along the way.

Most participants present with many barriers and varying reasons for not being in school such as bullying, anxiety, feeling isolated, moving from town to town and having no connections at school, poor literacy and numeracy skills making them feel inadequate at school and others just want to work. We hope to build more self-confidence within the participants in the group, support them to improve their literacy and numeracy through our Certificate II training and from being in a group setting their communication skills will hopefully be the most noticeable thing to improve by the end of the program.

Our young people have been working hard to earn points in our program which will get them a free trip to a theme park. Even this early in the program they are eager and looking towards the end goal. They are extremely hard workers and are silent during training, which is rare at DISCO. After seeing them work so hard on units and thrive on completing units correctly, I do believe we may have some go on to further study after DISCO which is exciting. So far, we have enjoyed visits from Kobi House, Drug Arm and will be having a visit from MAS in the near future. We have enjoyed an outing to the park and loved caring for an egg in our Childcare Industry Focus Day. We look forward to watching this group continue to grow and learn together in the coming months.

Jasmine Palm - James St & Get Set for Work Coordinator

2024 School Leaver's Guide

This guide is designed to provide you with a one-stop point of reference for contemporary career resources and information to your next big step; beyond the school gates! The guide should be used in its electronic format so that links to resources and websites remain 'live'.



Here is the link to the 2024 School Leaver's Guide:

<https://desbt.qld.gov.au/training/traininq-careers/courses/studentguide>

Content has been divided into sections & includes:

- Career & further study exploration – find resources to help you consider employment and further study options
- Subsidised training and incentives – search for subsidised training and financial assistance
- Industry specific career exploration – learn about the variety of opportunities in major Queensland job sectors
- Preparing to be job ready – find practical tips and information about what it means to be 'job ready'
- Assistance with finding a job – explore useful sites to help you search for and secure employment
- Support for young people: mental health and disability support – access links to a range of services and programs designed to assist you with mental illness or disability
- Support for year 13 Indigenous Youth – for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Support for young people with cancer – read practical, real examples of overcoming the challenges faced by young people to engage with school, study and work, during and after cancer treatment
- Support for young people living out of home – check out a range of apps and resources, including financial budgeting tools to successfully transition to independence.

Check it out!

Cover Letters

Have you wondered whether writing a cover letter to send with your resume is a waste of time? You're not alone if you said yes. But recruitment companies and employers will tell you that it's an essential part of your job application. In fact, a short, well-written cover letter could boost your chances of getting a job interview.

The cover letter is your first chance to make a good impression. Highlight your selling points and answer the seven main questions that an employer will have:

- *Can you do the job?*
- *Do you have the right qualifications, knowledge, skills, abilities and experience?*
- *Will you do the job well?*
- *Are you reliable, self-motivated and enthusiastic?*
- *Will you fit into the organisation? Are your values and goals a good match?*
- *Will you make a good impression on clients and co-workers?*
- *Do you have good written communication skills?*

Remember you are unlikely to be the only candidate for the role so the personalised effort you put into your cover letter to target the organisation & position, will be noticed!



Staff Profile – Maddy Campbell

My name is Maddy, & I'm the new addition to the team as the Youth Employment Support Officer working in the YES Program.

I graduated Grade 12 in 2021 from Toowoomba SHS and was lost on how to become work ready and what my next steps were from there. In March 2022, I got a phone call from DISCO who checked-in on my progress as part of their annual School Leaver Program calls & they offered to support me. I was enrolled in the YES program & gained support to get me job ready. I was even offered an opportunity to help the team with admin duties whilst securing myself a part-time retail job that offered me opportunities to develop and thrive. Since then, I have been in retail for 2 years & have become an assistant manager (which I love!) and I've also helped with the school leaver calls whilst studying.

I am currently studying for my *Bachelor of Human Services* Degree at USQ doing a double major in Child and Family Studies and Counselling.

Throughout school I have always been interested in youth work and had a passion for helping people which lead to me choosing my degree. So, when I was contacted by DISCO for a position as a Youth Employment Support Officer, I was very excited and thankful for the opportunity. I have a busy schedule of studying full-time and working two jobs, however I am doing something that I thrive in and helping young people is my ultimate goal.

Working alongside Dana and seeing how she interacts and helps her clients has been very inspiring to me and has motivated me to be my best self in this position. I have seen the different communities across the Toowoomba, Gatton, and Dalby sites, and have met different wonderful people that have the same passion as I do. I am so thankful to be working for a passionate and inspiring organisation and I am very grateful to be a part of this team.

Joke in the Corner

A guy is sitting at home when he hears a knock at the door. He opens the door and sees a snail on the porch. He picks up the snail and throws it as far as he can.

Three years later there's a knock on the door. He opens it and sees the same snail.

The snail says: 'What the hell was that all about?'