



DISCO Beat!

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Edition - 2022

Partnering Schools, Linking with Business, Supporting Youth!

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Mike's Column

2022 – A New Set of Challenges

We have all now accepted that change and upheaval in our personal and professional lives represents the new 'normal' as we navigate our way into 2022.

As the year commenced at DISCO many of the team members were split into two teams as we tried to minimise the impact of Covid on our operations. This important step, although minimising our face-to-face contact with clients which is less than ideal, enabled us to continue to offer services remotely as we assisted youth to develop skills and obtain work.

The incredible demand for unskilled labour has seen the youth unemployment rate nationally drop below 9.0% which is fantastic and locally in Toowoomba (QLD Statistician's Office – Dec 2021) we sit at a rate of 9.3%, Darling Downs / Maranoa at 11.4% and Queensland Outback at a worrying 36.5%. Queensland as a whole sits at 11.2%.

Our team is supporting and developing young people to commence work as quickly as we can but it's not fast enough to keep up with local demand as businesses continue to seek out new workers.

Disappointingly the organisation learnt in February that the tender lodged in late 2021 to seek to continue to deliver the Transition to Work Service (TtW) for the Department of Education, Skills and Employment for another 5 years, was unsuccessful. The new provider, The Busy Group (Busy At Work) will commence operations on the 1st of July this year.

This is a sad time for Gateway To Training (our consortium partner) as well as the Management Committee and all team members as we all genuinely loved delivering this contract right across the Darling Downs employment region. We wish the new provider well commencing service from later this year.

In 2021, 20,207 young people participated in the 20th annual *Mission Australia Youth Survey*. This landmark report provides rich and compelling evidence collected during the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic about young people's challenges, concerns, experiences and barriers to achieving their goals.

For the first time, COVID-19 is most important national issue according to young people, rising from second place in 2020 (38.8%) to the top spot in 2021 (45.7%). Survey responses reveal the pandemic and associated public health responses have had a negative effect on young people's health, wellbeing and education in 2021.

Mental Health, anxiety and other related conditions also rated very highly as young people look to navigate a way forward in a more complex and uncertain world.

I recommend the report to you which can be found at:

<https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/what-we-do/research-impact-policy-advocacy/youth-survey>

Just a reminder for anyone interested in reading DISCO's most recent Annual Report for 2020/21, it can be found at our website using the following link:

<https://www.disco.org.au/annual-reports>

Mike Paton - CEO

Snell Street News

After a well-deserved break over Christmas, the Snell Street team have returned ready for the new year ahead. We have started the year off with a strong and dedicated team and I would like to congratulate Bianca Swanton our Transition to Work Co-ordinator on her recent wedding!

One of the greatest gifts I can have as a manager is seeing the personal growth of your team and the life changing results they are bringing to our youth. It has been great to see the team assist our young people to want to learn and develop themselves into better people. Our team focuses on building a strong connection with our youth and gaining their trust, which has seen the young people bring down their walls and engage in intentional learning, while having fun.

If you know of someone aged 15 – 24, who would benefit from our assistance, please contact us on (07) 4638 3088. We provide assistance with career advice planning, training, job preparation support, work experience / PaTH Internships, job placement and follow-up support and personal development.

Kym Baills - Snell St Site Manager & Operations Manager

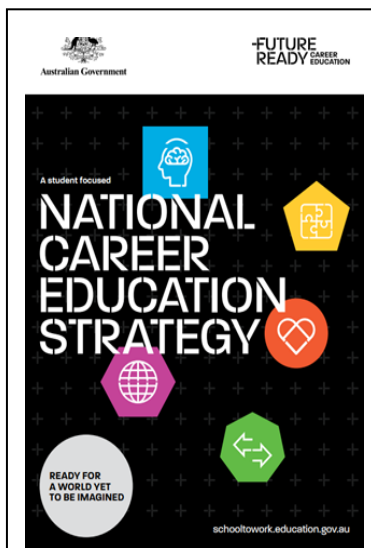
Future Ready

Future Ready is a student focused national career education strategy that was developed with a national group that brought together the voices of education, business and industry, parents and carers, career advisors and youth.

The vision of Future Ready is that every student in every school has access to high-quality career education to help them make a successful transition from school to further education, training, work or a combination of these.

Learn more about the *Future Ready Strategy* here:

https://www.yourcareer.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/future_ready_strategy.pdf



Joke in the Corner

A man in Melbourne calls his son in Brisbane the day before Christmas Eve and says,

"I hate to ruin your day, but I have to tell you that your mother and I are divorcing; forty-five years of misery is enough." 'Dad, what are you talking about?' the son screams.

"We can't stand the sight of each other any longer" the father says. "We're sick of each other and I'm sick of talking about this, so you call your sister in Adelaide and tell her."

Frantically, the son calls his sister, who explodes on the phone. "Like hell they're getting divorced!" she shouts, "I'll take care of this!"

She calls Melbourne immediately and screams at her father "You are NOT getting divorced. Don't do a single thing until I get there. I'm calling my brother back, and we'll both be there tomorrow. Until then, don't do a thing, DO YOU HEAR ME?" and hangs up.

The old man hangs up his phone and turns to his wife. 'Sorted! They're coming for Christmas - and they're paying their own way.'



YES Program

The Youth Employment Support (YES) Program is a short-term intervention project that assists young people between 15-24 years of age. The program offers an individualised support service for young job seekers for 6-8 weeks as they navigate and develop their desired career and/or educational pathways. The program is currently offered across the Toowoomba, Dalby, Gatton and Oakey regions and is excellent for young jobseekers who lack the knowledge and/or skills to gain employment.

YES specifically aims to develop young job seekers' practical skills and confidence. This is achieved through professional resume and cover letter writing support, job interview preparation, budgeting, and further job readiness skills in order to successfully obtain employment. As a result, many of the YES participants gain a set of highly developed skills that assist them in achieving their desired career prospects.

The program has already assisted many young people in 2022 to develop their skills and knowledge as they transition into the workforce. Many of these participants have demonstrated their developed confidence as they obtain interviews and successfully secure full-time apprenticeships and traineeships. These are astounding results, particularly for the beginning of the year, and many of the young people across the Darling Downs region are on track toward achieving their goals and visions.

There are currently spots available on the YES Program for young people who are wanting further assistance around finding work. We also have a range of jobs available for any young person wanting to step into the workforce, develop their skills, confidence and their professional profile.

Additionally, if any young people who sign up to the program also know of another young person who may benefit and they fit the criteria, they receive a \$50 voucher of their choice, to say THANKS! If you are interested and want to gather further information, please contact me on 0457 871 530 to secure your place on the YES program.

Dana Sallway – Youth Employment Support Officer



James Street News

The New Year has brought many changes for the James Street crew.

Two new position titles for existing staff, Sophie Steinhardt is our new Youth Support Coordinator and Mary Anyuat moved into an Administration Assistant role. We also have a placement student joining us on Wednesdays going forward and welcome Dana Sallway. A new last name for myself, Tessa Smith (marriage helped me achieve that), some new flooring, many new and improved ideas, and most importantly a new bunch of fantastic young people joining us for the first semester of 2022!

After a well-deserved break, the James Street staff have returned and are ready to support, work alongside and inspire 18 new Get Setters!

We began our semester at the beginning of February with an orientation session and have now been working with our young people for a few weeks. Over the past few weeks, we have been getting to know each other, setting goals for the program ahead and commencing our personal development, industry focus, work readiness and accredited training sessions. Several of the young people have missed large chunks of education and the James Street staff are excited to help them all learn in a practical non-traditional way.

As we wave goodbye to our 2021 program, we have been reflecting on the successful nature of it. 94% of the clients completed a Certificate II Qualification and 80% have exited the program with a positive outcome. Along with this reportable data, 34 young people walked out the door more confident, independent and ready to succeed.

Tessa Gavin
James Street Site Manager & Get Set for Work Coordinator



Quote of the Quarter

“Education is when you read the fine print. Experience is what you get if you don't”.

Pete Seeger

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Dalby Doings

Welcome to 2022!

I would like to welcome back Leisa Finch in the role of Get Set for Work Co-ordinator for our 2022 program. Leisa will be supported to deliver the program by Lara Smith in the role of a Youth Support Officer. Leisa and Lara formed a formidable pair in delivering last year's program and I am looking forward to seeing the new program they have put together for this year.

Our first Get Set for Work Program for 2022 commenced on the 14th of February with eleven participants. These young people will participate in career development, personal development, trade days and healthy lifestyles workshops whilst also completing a *Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways*. This program will graduate on the Thursday 23rd 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.

I would also like to welcome back Kirsten Williams in the role of Transition to Work Co-ordinator. Kirsten is being supported by Shaelie Bee as a Youth Development Officer/Employment Engagement Officer. I would like to congratulate Shaelie on receiving her Youth Worker qualification at the end of 2021.

The Transition to Work program helps young people aged between 15 –21 years of age who are looking for work or are underemployed or wanting further study. The TtW program offers young people assistance to get intensive pre-employment support to help them set and achieve their employment and/or education goals.

Dana Sallway works in the Dalby office one day a week on the Youth Employment Support (YES) 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. YES 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, YES or Transition to Work programs we can support the 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
Dalby Site Manager/Southwest Qld Area Manager



Gatton Update

Welcome 2022!

Now let's rewind a little. The end of 2021 we celebrated our GSFW semesters two's graduation. What a great night had by all, praising our young people's achievements, and enjoying a fun slideshow filled with photos and videos of all the fun times and memories made during their time at DISCO. It wasn't long after graduation, 2022 started to fill up with referrals flowing in from the high schools. Lockyer District High School included me in some of the parent teacher interviews which was great to meet with some of the potential 2022 clients.

After a well-deserved Christmas break, we were all back on deck but this year with an additional staff member. We welcomed Kyle Gelhaar to our team as our new trainee. Kyle finished school last year and jumped at the opportunity to work for DISCO. Kyle has already proven to be a great asset to the team and has hit the ground running.

Our Transition to work clients finished the year off strong with a large number of clients gaining employment or remaining employed. We also have a great little group of clients working hard on their certificates in business and Community services. With the support and help of Georgia from Aurora our study clients have completed their cert 3's or are not far off completing. We also continue to work with the remainder of our clients helping them to progress in achieving their chosen goals.

Our GSFW semester 1 group is now full, and they are all eager to learn, friendships are already forming, and we look forward to seeing all of them succeed in completing our program.

Kim Stevens
Gatton Site Coordinator



Create Foundation

Any young person who has or is experiencing the transition from adolescence to adulthood will acknowledge that, even under ideal circumstances, it can be a challenging



period in life marked by major transitions in various areas including finishing school, leaving home, commencing employment, getting married, and having children. The Create Foundation's research shows that a large proportion of young people transitioning from care to adulthood face significant challenges during this time including rushed transitions, upheaval, and a sudden reduction in support. Carers, caseworkers, family members, and members of the general community play an important role in a young person's transition from care to adulthood.

Over the years Create has developed a range of resources to assist young people transitioning from care; these resources can also aid the supportive adults in their life in providing support. Learn more at www.create.org.au



Staff Profile – Kyle Gelhaar

Hi Everyone,

My name is Kyle, and I am the latest addition to the DISCO team. I have recently completed Grade 12 at Lockyer District State High School at the end of 2021 and started working at DISCO mid-January as a full-time Community Services Trainee in the Gatton Office.

So, a little about me:

I started working in the hospitality industry when I was 14. After two years' experience I was promoted to a Shift Supervisor at the age of 16. Throughout my years of schooling, I was disengaged and was constantly in trouble. At the start of Grade 11 I was given an ultimatum to either improve my behavior and effort or potentially join DISCO as a client. Throughout this time, I found my partner Olivia, she encouraged and supported me as well as my family, her family and Lockyer Highs' 2021 Year 12 Coordinators. Due to me commitment at the end of Year 12, I received the Rising Phoenix Award. This is presented to the student who has demonstrated the most growth, to become a better version of themselves. From 60 behavior reports, D's and E's in Year 9 to a B average as well as a *Certificate 3 in Sport and Recreation* and a *Certificate 2 in Hospitality* by the end of Year 12.

The reason I wanted to work at DISCO and be a youth worker was because I wanted to help people like I was helped, I want to help young people become the best version of themselves, I want to help young people improve and achieve their goals.

Therefore, I am thankful for the opportunity to work at DISCO and become the best youth worker I can possibly be!

Kyle Gelhaar
Community Services Trainee

