



everyone's family

Enacting curriculum for diversity

Australian Curriculum Studies Conference

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1 October, 2015
Adelaide, South Australia

The Smith Family



OUR VISION

A better future for young Australians in need.

OUR MISSION

To create opportunities for young Australians in need by providing long-term support for their participation in education.

OUR BELIEF

Every child deserves a chance.

OUR HISTORY

Established in 1922 by a group of businessmen

OUR SCALE

Support 125,000 children, young people, their carers and community professionals a year.
34,000 young people on a long-term educational scholarship.
94 communities across every state and territory.



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THE CONTEXT OF OUR WORK

Young people are behind at each stage

EARLY YEARS



Developmentally vulnerable

One in three children in most disadvantaged communities is developmentally vulnerable in one or more key areas when they start school eg social, cognitive, communication

PRIMARY YEARS



Numeracy

More than 10% difference in Year 5 students at or above national minimum standard based on parents' education.

SECONDARY YEARS



Year 12 completion

More than 10% difference based on socio-economic status of students. 2-3 year gap in performance in maths, science, reading, ICT between high and low SES at age 15.

POST-SCHOOL YEARS



Post-school engagement

Post-school, 42% of 17–24 year olds from most disadvantaged backgrounds not fully engaged in work or study, cf 17% among most advantaged.

Young people's development

- Multiple influences on young person's development – child, family, peers, institutions including schools, community
- Early intervention – mitigates risk or prevents emerging problem getting worse
- Balanced intervention for disadvantaged children gives best return on investment
 - Invest early and keep on investing throughout young person's life (James Heckman)



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THE STUDENTS AND FAMILIES ON OUR *LEARNING FOR LIFE* EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

Learning for Life students and families



- 34,000 students
- All low income families – Health Care Card or pension
- 18% Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background
- 68% of parents not in the labour force or unemployed
- Over half are single parent; a third of households are 6 or more
- Around 40% of students and 50% of parents have a health issue
- 20% of students have been at 4 or more schools and 1 in 20 have been at 6 or more schools

LfL students are more disadvantaged than their school peers

	Total student population for 50 NSW schools (n=31,478) %	TSF LFL students in the same schools (n=2,591) %
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background	14.3	24.7
Parent/Carer Year 12 completion or Post-school education	80.3	39.4
Parent/Carer University education	12.5	3.4
Parent/Carer Employed	79.0	18.4

- More likely to be of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background
- Less likely to have a parent who has completed Yr 12 or university
- Less likely to have a parent who is employed

These are all disadvantaged schools

Young people missing out on school activities

- 1 in 3 young people indicate they miss out on at least 1 school related activity (school camp, excursion or elective subject) because of costs
- More than half this group don't tell their parent about the activity so they don't worry
- 1 in 10 parents indicate their students get all their school expenses met 'as often as needed'
- 20-30% of students don't have internet access at home all the time



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THE *LEARNING FOR LIFE* PROGRAM

Learning for Life scholarship



Parent and community engagement

Parental engagement in children's learning is bigger predictor of how children do in school than family's socioeconomic status.

It is one tool that can help close the gap in achievement between children of different socioeconomic backgrounds.

Key programs at different life stages

EARLY YEARS



- *Let's Count*
- *Let's Read*

PRIMARY YEARS



- *Student2student* reading program
- Learning Clubs

SECONDARY YEARS



- *iTrack* career mentoring
- Creative enrichment
- Career and post-school pathways
- Work Inspiration
- *Girls @ the Centre*

POST-SCHOOL YEARS



- Tertiary mentoring
- Financial Literacy

PARENTS AND CARERS



- *Tech Packs*
- Financial Literacy



Learning for Life
scholarship

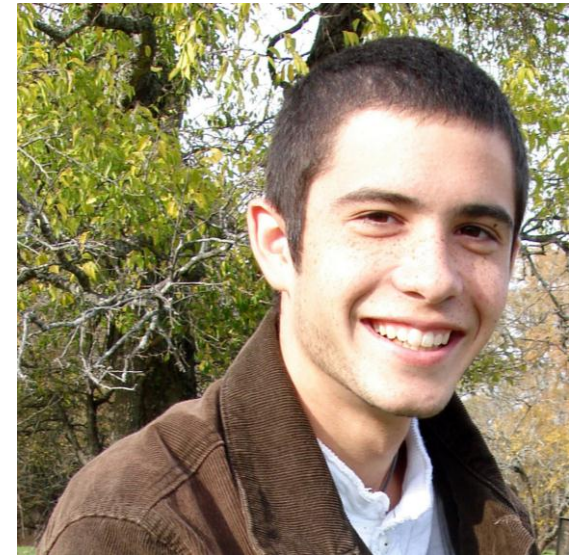


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OUR OUTCOMES

Short and longer-term outcomes

- Outcomes Based Accountability measures for all programs
- Short term outcomes (eg literacy, knowledge, confidence, motivation, networks) are foundations/stepping stones to 3 longer-term outcomes:
 - Improve **school attendance** over time to 90%
 - Increase proportion of students who advance to **Year 12**
 - Increase proportion of students engaged in **employment and further education** after they leave the program
- Research informed, policy and practice relevant
- Over half of our secondary students have been on program for 5 or more years



Increased school attendance

The Smith Family's average attendance rates

91.3%

For *Learning for Life*
primary school students

86.9%

For *Learning for Life*
secondary school students

87.3%

For *Learning for Life* Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander school students

**These are 2014 figures
and there has been
steady year on year
improvement for all
three rates since 2012**



Improved Year 12 completion

The Smith Family's advancement rate

63.2%

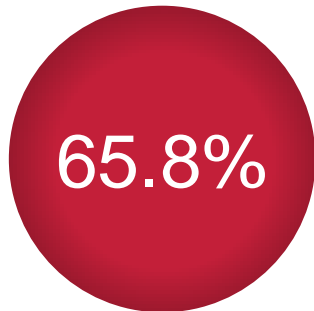
Learning for Life students who were in Year 10 in 2012 and advanced to Year 12 or its equivalent by 2014 while still on the program.
Up from 60% for the period 2010–12.



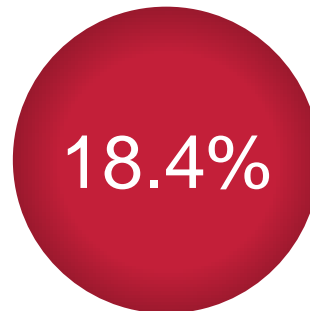
This is a longitudinal measure, not an apparent measure like much of the available educational data

Successful post school transitions

Fully engaged



Partly engaged



84.2% of former LfL students are engaged in work and/or study 12 months after leaving the program

Learning for Life students in work or study 12 months after leaving the program. This is of students who left the program in Years 10, 11 or 12. Of the 15.8% who were not engaged, 80% were actively seeking employment and one in 6 was volunteering.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, 74.2% were engaged – 54.6% were fully engaged and 19.6% were partially engaged.



Conclusion

- Context of our work is the significant gap in educational achievement for children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Our approach recognises multiple influences on young people's outcomes, is early intervention and long-term
- Improvements are possible
- Partnerships with families, schools, governments, non-government organisations, researchers, business and philanthropy, are the key to breaking the cycle of disadvantage
- Curriculum, schools and systems all have a key role to play
- Need stronger focus on building and sharing the evidence base on what works to improve disadvantaged young people's outcomes



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