

Quotes from Young People

"I left school because I was picked on by other kids. I was pretty depressed. The Centre has helped my confidence and I am going back to high school next term."

Stacey 13 years

"The Centre is great. The teachers take time to explain things and they are always looking out for your best interests. The Centre has made me learn a lot about life and I think other kids think so too."

Jason, 14 years

"The Link Centre helped me with reading and writing. Now I can get into the school course that I want to do."

Brian, 14 years



The Link Centre Laverton
In partnership with
Laverton Secondary College

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Referrals and Intake Criteria

The Link Centre caters to the needs of young people between the ages of 12 and 14 years who have discontinued mainstream education. The aim of the staff at the Centre is that each enrolled young person will experience a successful transition into mainstream education after participation in the Centre's program. It is important to determine that the Centre is able to attend to the educational, social and emotional needs of each young person.

This "match" can only be accurately evaluated within the first month (a probationary enrolment period) of a young person's programme and attendance participation. Much of the evaluation during the early stage of enrolment depends upon the young person demonstrating a real desire to return to mainstream education.

The young people are enrolled through Laverton Secondary College, located beside the Link Centre. The College provides invaluable support and numerous resources to the Centre. Referral forms can be requested from the Manager.

Link Centre Goal

The goal of the Centre is to provide positive experiences of success in education and to minimise the effects of disadvantaged life circumstances. Building self-confidence is an integral part of the program which aims to maximise young people's opportunities to take their place as useful, valued and capable members of mainstream schools.

The Link Centre Story

The Link Centre is a unique transition and development center for young people, aged 12-14, who have become disengaged from mainstream education. In 2001, it was realised that each year many young people in Melbourne's Western suburbs were not enrolled and did not attend school, even though they were legally required to do so. The estimated lifetime cost to the community as a result of this situation is in the order of one million dollars per young person and the Link Centre was established to rectify this situation.

Most young people attending have case histories with abuse, mental illness, social disengagement and neglect. The Centre provides young people with practical skills through an accessible academic and social curriculum. The Centre also addresses social skills and attempts to give young people greater confidence and resilience.

Funding

The Link Centre at Laverton is a not-for-profit organisation established with funding from the Pratt Foundation in early 2005. The Commonwealth Department of Education Science and Training has contributed funding for operating costs, however this funding is not ongoing and must be continually sought. The Link Centre also receives some funding from the Victorian Government Department of Education ("Student Resource Package") as part of an arrangement with the Laverton Secondary College.

While this funding is sufficient to cover staff and other basic costs, the Link Centre relies on philanthropic support to deliver the specialised programs required to enable these disengaged young people to return to mainstream secondary education.

The Link Centre is endorsed by the Australian Taxation Office as a tax exempt charitable entity and as a deductible gift recipient. Donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

