COLLEGE NEWS

Summer 2025/2026

Creating a brighter future



Celebrating our 2025 Boarding College graduates

Following two years of transformative experiences and lifechanging lessons, nine students from our STEPS Pathways Boarding College have officially graduated, with another student receiving an Achievement Award.

Graduation marks the end of their journey through our curriculum but the beginning of a lifetime of independence, learning and self-empowerment. The students had the chance to reflect on the ways they'd grown throughout their time in the Boarding College and reminisce on all the memories made.

The December ceremony featured the graduates, their families, STEPS Trainers and Support Officers, and Sunshine Coast community figures who proudly celebrated the students' journeys - past, present and future.

STEPS Managing Director, Carmel Crouch AM, said that although the graduates will be missed dearly, this ceremony is the very point of STEPS Pathways College: giving young people with a disability and autism the tools, knowledge and experience they need to live confidently and independently and achieve their goals.

"This is absolutely my favourite day of the year, and it's not difficult to understand why," she said. "We've had the privilege of watching these amazing young people explore their passions, form lasting friendships, step out of their comfort zones and achieve things that they and their families may have thought they'd never achieve. This is their time to stand proud and look back on how far they've come." After the graduation ceremony's moving speeches and slideshows, everyone enjoyed an afternoon tea connecting and reminiscing.

We wish our graduates all the very best for a lifetime filled with independence, happiness and accomplishment.

STEPS PATHWAYS COLLEGE

07 5458 3000
customercare@stepsgroup.com.au
stepspathways.com.au



Principal's message

Welcome to the latest edition of our STEPS Pathways College newsletter. It's been an inspiring few months on campus, rounding out a year of meaningful experiences, powerful connections and proud moments of personal growth for our students.

In this issue, you'll see some of the exciting opportunities that our students have embraced, such as starring as extras in a local short film.

We celebrated the launch of our very own Mini Woolies, a vibrant new learning space that is already strengthening our students' confidence and real-world skills through an immersive roleplaying experience.

You'll also meet two members of our STEPS Pathways College community, Kloe and Trainer Melissa, and have a chance to reflect on the joy and connection on display at our latest STEPS Pathways College Graduation through the beautiful photo collage on the back cover.

As we look back on graduation, a milestone marking the culmination of our students' two-year journey, I am reminded of the determination, courage and personal triumphs that these incredible young people demonstrate every day at our College in ways both big and small.

Thank you for supporting our College and our students, I hope you enjoy seeing their transformative experiences from the last few months.

Stephanie Patey
Executive Principal and CEO
STEPS Pathways College and STEPS Social Business

How you can help

The generosity of our community helps make STEPS Pathways College possible.

Your donation is fully tax deductible and has the power to change a student's life for the better, giving them the skills they need for independence, empowerment, and connection.

With your help, we can continue to build a brighter future for young people living with a disability and autism.



Thank you!



Kilcoy Global Foods team members with STEPS Executive Manager for Business Partnerships Michael Williamson [Centre left]

Thank you to Kilcoy Global Foods

Kilcoy Global Foods brings decades of excellence in premium beef, lamb and high-quality protein to more than 35 countries worldwide; yet, they are proudly focused on supporting their local South East Queensland community.

Their reputation for quality and consistency is matched only by their commitment to making a positive impact beyond the dinner table, and their generous contribution to this year's STEPS Grand Winter Ball – featuring their world-renowned beef – added a special touch to the evening's culinary experience.

Kilcoy Global Foods' commitment to social responsibility shines through in their ongoing support of STEPS Pathways College. "We're proud to stand alongside STEPS and support the incredible work they do," their team shared.

Thank you to Kilcoy Global Foods for your generosity and heart!

Curriculum news



Students enjoy practising retail skills with Mini Woolies







Students enjoy practising retail skills at the STEPS Mini Woolies

STEPS Pathways College is proud to host the Sunshine Coast's first Mini Woolies – a fully immersive, supermarket-style learning space designed to help students develop their real-world skills through role playing activities.

Created in partnership with Woolworths Group, the Mini Woolies looks and feels just like a functioning mini supermarket. Shelves are neatly stocked, uniforms hang ready for service, and the register is set for students to practise everything from scanning items to counting change. Students on the other side of the counter also get to practise their shopping and budgeting skills.

Every detail has been thoughtfully designed to help young adults with a disability and autism strengthen their numeracy, communication and customer service skills through hands-on learning.

STEPS Pathways College Executive, Principal Stephanie Patey, said the excitement around campus leading up to launch day was infectious.

"We are extremely proud to launch the STEPS Mini Woolies site and look forward to the countless number of opportunities it will provide our students," Ms Patey said.

"Our STEPS Mini Woolies site is an incredible addition to STEPS Pathways College and further enables us to provide our students with holistic education that empowers them with the skills and confidence to reach for the sky and live their very best life."

Students shine on screen in local short film

Five STEPS Pathways College students recently had their moment on the silver screen, volunteering as extras in an inclusive short film called 'Beach Watch.'

Supported by a Pathways College Trainer, the students spent the day on set meeting the producers, working alongside local filmmakers and stepping into the required background roles. Each student embraced the experience with enthusiasm, excited to be part of a local production.

The excitement didn't end there. In October, three of the participating students – Alec, Joy and Maddie – attended the official premiere. They enjoyed the full film-star treatment: a red carpet entrance, free popcorn, and the big reveal of the finished movie on the big screen.

'Beach Watch' is a disability-inclusive film produced by Chony's Art Room, a local art class and workshop provider, and is based on the life of Sunshine Coast local Andrew Toolis, a man with Down Syndrome who loves 'Bay Watch.' All proceeds from ticket sales were donated to Our Moon's Mission, a local charity funding research into SPG56, a rare neurodegenerative condition.

Congratulations to our students for stepping out of their comfort zones, connecting with their community in a unique way, and celebrating themselves through inclusive storytelling.



[L-R] Alec, Joy and Maddie attend Beach Watch movie premiere

Lachlan gains confidence and independence on two wheels

For Lachlan, learning to ride his bike represented more than just a new hobby; it was a step towards greater confidence and independence.

Over the past few months, Lachlan has been working closely with Trainer George to build the skills needed to become a safe and capable bike rider.

Together, they practised everything from road rules and hazard awareness to proper helmet use, bike maintenance and route planning. Each session helped

Lachlan grew more confident in his abilities, turning something that once felt very challenging into an exciting personal milestone.



George [L] and Lachlan [R] at the bike shop

All that hard work paid off when Lachlan proudly went out with George one weekend and purchased his very own bike. Now, he's able to independently explore the local community in a whole new way, enjoying the freedom of riding while using the safety and navigation skills he mastered with his Trainer.

Through the power of perseverance and holistic support from the STEPS Pathways College team, Lachlan has achieved a pivotal personal goal. Go, Lachlan!



Make a difference. Become a volunteer.

Volunteers are an integral part of STEPS – and we want your help to deliver lifechanging opportunities to our students.

Whether your skills lie in the kitchen, classroom, garden or beyond, we have a role that suits your unique experience and interests.

If you are unable to commit to a regular volunteering role, we have opportunities for one-time positions at our many community events.

For more information, please contact our Volunteer Relationship Coordinator, Karla.

07 5458 3002

volunteer@stepsgroup.com.au

Mark your calendar!

STEPS Pathways College Open Day – Tuesday 17 March 2026

STEPS Garden Centre Harvest Day – Saturday 21 March 2026



Visit our website for more information and to RSVP

Trainer profile

What do you teach at STEPS Pathways College?

As a Classroom Teacher with STEPS Pathways College, I currently work with students on budgeting and meal planning. This involves helping students look at their expenses and their income, and how this can apply to planning their spending and weighing up 'wants' versus 'needs.' This also helps them plan their meals for the week, sticking to affordable and healthy options.

What do your students teach you?

My students remind me that we all see the world through different lenses. We all feel and interpret the world differently, including me, and part of understanding that is practising patience, compassion and flexibility.

What do you enjoy teaching your students?

I enjoy being able to teach my students new ways of looking at things, including tips and tricks for navigating the supermarket and planning meals that are cheap, easy and nutritious. I like helping them develop money skills for everyday living and budgeting in a realistic way, and how to set these systems up for long-term security.

What is the most valuable thing that you have learnt in your role?

I have learnt many valuable things since being in this role, including that the capacity for learning is far greater than most people realise. We live in an ever-evolving world and it's so important to be open to lifelong learning; I learn something new almost every day. I've also been reminded that a plan is just a plan, it's not set in stone. Instead, see plans as guides that can evolve as information and goals change.

What has been a highlight for you so far?

I have really loved engaging with the other awesome trainers, I've felt so welcomed by them. It's also a highlight every day seeing the joy on the students' faces when they achieve something, no matter how big or small it may seem.



Jane



Kloe

Student profile

What hobbies or activities do you enjoy?

I like to go out with my group of friends, listen and dance to hip-hop, and cook.

What classes do you enjoy taking at STEPS Pathways College?

I enjoy the Cleaning Masterclass and using what I've learnt to clean the unit. I also really like the one-on-one sessions with trainers.

What do you enjoy about STEPS Pathways College outside of the classroom?

The STEPS Grand Winter Ball and TSS camp were both really fun. We also got to go to the Chermside Water Park for a Saturday activity one time, I loved it.

What are some valuable life skills you have learnt so far during your time at STEPS?

Preparing and cooking my own dinners. I really like trying new foods and drinks, and when my trainer Drew helps me make things like mash and gravy.

Who is someone you look up to?

I'm really proud of myself!

What are your goals for the future?

I want to have my own house with access for my wheelchair. My biggest dream is to see the old Wiggles – Jeff, Greg, Anthony, Murray, and Dorothy the Dinosaur.

What advice would you give to someone wanting to attend STEPS Pathways College?

All the trainers and students are really good and they make me laugh a lot, and everyone helps you become more independent.

Enrolments are open for STEPS Pathways College for 2026

STEPS
PATHWAYS COLLEGE

07 5458 3000
customercare@stepsgroup.com.au
stepspathways.com.au





2025



















Sign up to get this newsletter in your inbox

@stepspathwayscollege

@stepspathwayscollege

Creating a brighter future