COLLEGE NEWS

Winter Edition 2024

Learning skills for a life of independence



Students shine at the Grand Winter Ball

To complement the students' learning in the subjects of Community Connections and Social Skills, all Boarding College students eagerly prepared for our annual STEPS Grand Winter Ball. In preparation, they have been working through the unit of 'Getting Ready for Special Occasions' which highlights the importance of formal etiquette, manners, understanding appropriate social interactions and presenting yourself with care and attention to grooming and hygiene.

With a focus on the Grand Winter Ball, students prepared their outfit and grooming with budget limitations in mind and reviewed their emotional regulation tools for busy environments.

Students had the opportunity to volunteer some of their night which gave them a chance to build their confidence and social skills. The volunteers helped with greeting guests, selling raffle tickets and assisting in the smooth running of the night.

Nerves affected some of the students but the bravery we saw in them getting up on stage to be introduced to the crowd was incredible. Some even found the confidence to get up on stage with the Kitty Kats to dance and sing along.

Students had a wonderful night of mingling and talking to other guests, meeting some famous faces and practicing their new skills while having lots of fun.



STEPS PATHWAYS COLLEGE

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



Stephanie

Principal's message

It fills me with great pride to bring you this edition of our STEPS Pathways College newsletter and to be the Principal of this wonderful educational organisation.

Some of the stories featured in this Winter 2024 edition include our students participating in the annual STEPS Grand Winter Ball, attending our annual The TSS (The Southport School) camping trip, meeting Sunshine Coast Lightning players, and learning important parts of our curriculum.

Under the expert mentoring of our trainers, each of these experiences provide powerful learning opportunities that help our students to find and fulfil their potential. The skills and confidence our students develop through activities such as camp on South Stradbroke Island is incredible to witness and I am extremely proud to see our students step out of their comfort zone and embrace challenges.

I feel extremely privileged to be part of each and every student's journey towards achieving a lifetime of independence. I would like to thank our students for their hard work and dedication, our students' parents for trusting us to deliver the knowledge and skills to help their children thrive, and to all our supporters and partners for generosity which helps us make a real and lasting difference to the lives of young people with a disability and autism.

I encourage you to come to our beautiful campus to see our College first-hand, have a delicious coffee, sweet treat or lunch at our Café on George, or pick up some plants and gardening supplies at our STEPS Garden Centre. You will meet our amazing team and see some of our students around campus learning skills for life!

Until next edition,

Stephanie Patey
Executive Principal
STEPS Pathways College and STEPS Social Business

How you can help

The generosity of our community has changed our students' lives.

By donating you have the chance to change many more.

With help from our brilliant community, we can create brighter futures for people with a disability and autism.



Thank you!

Work experience

Boarding College Transition Students have been spending time completing work experience shifts at our very own Café and Garden Centre. During this time, students develop job readiness skills, focus on understanding and improving interpersonal skills and learn hard skills associated with the hospitality and horticulture industries.

Students are supported to be on time, present themselves in the workplace uniform, have a flexible and adaptive mindset, follow instructions and develop their customer-service skills.

The success of the work experience sessions is a testament to the hard work and commitment the students put into the work experience shifts.







Curriculum news

Practicing culinary skills

In our Day College, our students have been focusing on Effective Communication, Maintaining a Healthy Body, and Social Eating.

During this time, the students spend a lot of hours cooking in the fully equipped kitchen where they can practice their culinary skills and learn the importance of a balanced diet.

Through cooking healthy meals and snacks, students learn how to follow recipes and instructions, handle kitchen equipment, understand potential risks and hazards in the kitchen and the importance of connecting with others during social eating.

Mindfulness

After exploring mindfulness in class, Day College students went on an excursion to the beach to explore how to be grounded and use their strategies in situ.

After learning how to use a Go Card and how to read bus and train timetables, along with how to use the Journey Planner website, students navigated around Caloundra and even the STEPS site on treasure hunts.

Online Day College students participated in their culminating activity for Travel Safely, completing a treasure hunt in their communities. One student took us through the Inala Shopping Centre in Brisbane to demonstrate the places they enjoyed and could find support.

Day College Online units also noted the skills they had learned during their Kitchen Etiquette unit to assist them in their confidence.

Scan to view
Online Students' Kitchen Video



Learning: Community connections and social skills

Boarding College Students in the development phase have been spending time completing the Unit: 'Accessing Entertainment Venues and Community Spaces' which focuses on the key areas of learning: Community Connections and Social Skills. The purpose of completing this area of study is to build the students' confidence in accessing venues and community spaces to build their social network and connect with the local and wider community.

Throughout the unit students learn to plan social events, research upcoming local events and stay safe whilst out and about. They assess risks, plan transport, look at the rules and regulations of local venues and practice researching, contacting, planning and scheduling activities.

These skills were put into practice on an excursion to Maroochy Bushland Botanic Garden. Everyone worked as a group to plan the excursion to Maroochy Bushland Reserve by researching information on local websites, planning for weather, budgeting, working out what appropriate clothing to wear, and what to pack and bring on the day.









Become a volunteer

Whether your skills lie in the kitchen, classroom, nursery or beyond, we have just the role to suit your unique skill set. If a once off volunteer opportunity is more for you, we also have many community events that are great opportunities to help make a difference.

Volunteers are an integral part of STEPS. Become a STEPS volunteer today and help us empower individuals with the tools they need to path their own road to success.

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

07 5458 3002 or
volunteer@stepsgroup.com.au

Annual camp to South Stradbroke Island

Our STEPS Pathway Boarding College students went away on their annual camp to South Stradbroke Island with TSS (The Southport School) where they immersed themselves in the outdoors.

They all had a wonderful experience enjoying nature and even got to see some whales! Many students had not been on a camp before, so this experience allowed them to adventure outside of their comfort zone.







Some of the activities allowed them to experience relying on a team, drumming around the fire at night, interacting with people they have not met before, and early morning wake up calls.

All of these activities and adjustments ensured the students could practice many skills like socialising, gratitude communication, adapting to change and compromising.

The students really enjoyed camp and even enjoy disconnecting and being in the moment away from internet!



Trainer profile

What do your students teach you?

There are multiple ways of learning and communicating. The skill of communication is not just about someone talking. They humble me daily. In the classroom, I might be the trainer, but we are learning from each other.

What do you enjoy teaching your students?

Each topic brings its own set of challenges and rewards. I enjoy each topic for different reasons. The students sometimes struggle to understand the reason for a topic being taught to begin with, so sometimes the enjoyment can come from seeing them begin to see the value in what they are learning.

Each lesson and topic is designed to bring them closer to being able to make informed decisions about their lives and their future. I want them to understand that there are consequences for all of the choices they make.

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

The importance of being "teachable". I learnt that being "teachable" is the most important skill to have. That if I walk into a classroom ready to learn from my students then they will also walk into the classroom ready to learn from me.

What has been a highlight for you so far?

I have been fortunate enough to see some of our students transition into the life they always wanted to have but never dreamed they would. I have been part of helping parents see their "kids" transform into "adults" who can speak up for themselves. Some of these students now live with minimal support after previously having lived at home where they didn't even make their own beds.

Now they do their own shopping, cook their own meals and budget and save for holidays and get to make their own informed decisions. I am incredibly grateful to be part of a team that change families, and our students lives for the better. We help our students reach their potential and show those who said they "never would or could" that they in fact can and will!!



Craig

Craig Bardsley
Trainer

STEPS Pathways College

Student profile



Luke

Tell us about yourself...

What things do you enjoy?

Hi, my name is Luke. I am 20-years-old, and I am from Victoria. I have been living in Queensland since 2020. I enjoy working out to keep fit and healthy, I like walking along the beach, I enjoy watching YouTube and I like to help others whenever I can.

What classes do you enjoy taking at Pathways Boarding College?

I enjoy cooking classes and the independent living skills class.

What do you enjoy about Pathways Boarding College Life?

Pushing myself and my limits to learn new skills to help boost my confidence.

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

To accept people who are different from me.

What are your goals for the future?

To become employed and to get my own house or unit.

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

Always try your absolute best and to know you have support around you.

Enrolments are open for our Pathways Boarding College for January 2025

STEPS PATHWAYS COLLEGE

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





An exciting visit from Sunshine Coast Lightning players

STEPS Pathways College student were excited to receive a special visit from Sunshine Coast Lightning players, Courtney Bruce, Liz Watson, and Tara Hinchcliffe.

The students enjoyed talking to the players, learning about the game of netball, fostering new skills including passing the ball, and practicing the team's special celebration.

Courtney, Liz and Tara loved spending time with the students and getting to know them all. They especially enjoyed watching the students unique personalities emerge as they became more comfortable. Most of our students had never played netball before so they took a while to understand some of the rules such as no travelling with the ball.

Thank you to our supporter, Ken Mills Toyota, who work hard to create and foster community partnerships and for facilitating this special visit.

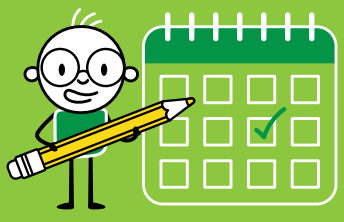
Mark your calendar!

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday 17 September - STEPS Pathways College Open Day

DECEMBER

Tuesday 3 December - STEPS Pathways College Open Day



Visit our website for more information and to RSVP

Sign up to get this newsletter in your inbox

Be More, Do More, Achieve More

STEPSPathwaysCollege

stepspathwayscollege