

Case Study

The young person was connected with the Program 4 years ago, but disengaged as a result of substance abuse and housing issues. The young person has now had their second child and has re-engaged with the Program with an exceptional level of attendance and positive attitude. The young person is no longer using any substance (has been clean for over six months) and is continually demonstrating a great level of receptiveness to support and new approaches to dealing with parenting and personal issues. The young person's work ethic and attendance cannot be faulted. Previously, the young person was rarely attending class, but now attends all classes and excursions, as well as being highly supportive and encouraging to their peers.

Upon re-entry to the Program, the young person identified difficulties managing the behaviour of their youngest child. Both the Family Support Worker (FSW) and Early Childhood Mentor (ECM) have worked closely with the young person and child to monitor and implement appropriate behavioural management strategies. Within a short period of time positive changes were being identified by both the young person and staff.

As part of an extended VCAL project, the young person has been researching issues around dental health. Within the scope of this project the FSW arranged for the local dental health service to engage with the Program participants. The young person had the opportunity to undertake an initial dental health examination during this incursion, and has since engaged with the dental service externally, with their children.

The young person also identified some concerns around the hearing of the youngest child. These issues were then addressed with the guidance and support of the ECM and FSW, who have assisted the young person in arranging appointments with the appropriate auditory assessment services. (Maternal Child Health and Frankston Hospital)

In Term 2 the young person, along with all Program participants undertook a healthy cooking day. This cooking day was part of a broader topic relating to nutrition and health. The young person was not only capable of sourcing a high quality recipe to utilise in the cooking day, but also sourced recipes for four classmates. The young person undertook this activity with great enthusiasm, not only in the planning and preparation phase, but right through to the cooking and cleaning, (the time when the majority of participants have lost interest.) The young person took home a selection of meals left over from the cooking day, which were then enjoyed by their extended family of twelve all living together under the same roof .

Term 2 has seen the LEC participants undertake swimming lessons at Peninsula Aquatic Recreation Centre (PARC). This has been a great opportunity for the young people and their children to gain valuable knowledge and skills in water safety. The young participant has attended ten out of the ten lessons offered. The participant and partner (father of the two children) both got into the water with their youngest child for all lessons. This activity has been a very positive way for the parents to bond with their child, simultaneously gaining new knowledge and skills together.

This young person now stands as a strong candidate for the FMPLLEN, 2018 VCAL Awards nominee of the LEC Program.