

ParentsNext participants supporting Inside Out 4 Kids

This year 3 Launceston ParentsNext participants took part in National Joblink's Worry Monsters Enterprise Learning Project (ELP) to support City Mission's Inside Out 4 Kids Program. Inside Out 4 Kids is a primary school early intervention program to support children experiencing loss, anxiety, grief, and the big emotions children often experience but struggle to understand, communicate and manage. At the end of the 5 week program over 4 fortnights the ParentsNext participants and mentors created 16 hand crafted Worry Monsters to be presented to children participating in the Inside Out 4 Kids program in the local community.

The participants were excited to be supporting the local community and increase their own skills, which included communication, social skills, negotiating, budgeting, online ordering, teamwork, time management, preparation and planning skills. Participants already had the handy craftwork talent required for this job! (This came in handy for mentors who are not so crafty).

Due to regular attendance of the Worry Monsters ELP mentors were able to engage with participants consistently and open group discussions around future goals of education, employment and barriers that participants may be facing. Mentors were able to support participants to identify solutions to barriers and help with increasing confidence and self esteem which resulted in 2 of the 3 participants gaining casual employment prior to completing the project. All participants finished the project with a noticeable increase in confidence and social skills for the future.



At the final session, participants were able to present the Worry Monsters to Inside Out 4 Kids representative Kate who was thrilled with the outcome and thanked them for all their hard work. Kate gave an overview of how the Worry Monsters will support the children currently involved in the program and shared a story with everyone about identifying worries and what causes them. Overall the ParentsNext participants enjoyed the experience and were very proud to be supporting a cause very close to them with most participants having school aged children.



From all the staff at National Joblink we wish
you a Happy and Safe 2024

Melissa – ParentsNext, NT

When Melissa (Mel) started with ParentsNext in January 2022, Mel disclosed to her mentors that she was struggling with health, mental health, educational and training barriers. Mel identified that staying motivated was challenging and was reluctant to ask for support. After building a strong rapport with her mentors and sourcing much needed motivation from thinking about her daughter and what example Mel would like to set for her, Mel decided she would like to work towards her goal of obtaining FIFO work in the mining industry and Mel's ParentsNext Mentors, Fiona and Ange, sought to help Mel make that goal a reality.

With the support of her mentors and through accessing the ParentsNext Participation Fund, Mel has successfully obtained her Heavy Rigid Truck License, Forklift License, First Aid Certificate and Dangerous Goods License. Fiona and Ange also supported Mel through the 6-week short course in Digital Literacy that National Joblink delivers to break down barriers and provide basic Digital Literacy for participants to further reduce Mel's barriers, which would not have been achieved without Mel's eagerness to attend and learn.



In October 2023 Mel's ambition and hard work paid off, Mel successfully gained employment as a FIFO Plant Operator with NT Bitumen and Asphalt.

Mel contacted her ParentsNext Mentors asking for support in obtaining her white card within a week as she needed it to commence work. Our team collaborated with Kullaru Training and Assessing to enrol Mel into the white card course and accessed the use of the ParentsNext Participation Fund to support Mel with this. Within two days, she successfully obtained her white card and was almost ready to fly out to work, all she needed was some appropriate safety (PPE) work clothes.

Mel met with the ParentsNext Support Mentor, Teegan, and the ParentsNext Participation Fund was utilised to purchase the PPE required for her role.

Mel is thankful for the support she has received from her mentors and ParentsNext as *"it's changed my life"*.

Deanna – ParentsNext, Hobart TAS

Prior to commencing with National Joblink (NJL) and ParentsNext, anytime Deanna considered getting a job she "freaked out" about every single thing as she was so self-conscious. Her employment preference was to work as a cleaner, late at night where no one could see her. She was excited to finally be part of ParentsNext. With her NJL Mentor making appropriate referrals, Deanna quickly went to work in breaking down a range of barriers, all of which were affecting her self-esteem. Attending weekly appointments with 26TEN to increase her confidence in reading and writing in front of others. Deanna said that *"being linked to 26TEN made me realise I wasn't as silly as I thought I was"* and she also participated in the Women's Support Service (Relationships Australia) to deal with non-vocational issues/barriers as a key step in her progress towards achieving education and employment goals.

NJL accessed the ParentsNext Participation Fund to pay for emergency accommodation *"which was massive"* according to Deanna, she now has her own house. Deanna said her confidence has increased and she is taking the opportunity to be involved in a number of NJL ParentsNext activities, including: photography club, walking group, short courses and our Parents Leadership Team.

With the use of the ParentsNext Participation Fund, most recently Deanna has enrolled in a Certificate III in Community Services and a First Aid Course, with the goal of obtaining employment in this industry.

"ParentsNext helped me get my independence back which is amazing. I can now choose. It's my house, and my job and I can consider options that I previously wouldn't have been able to. I can choose who I want in my life, I can do it myself now. I'm not relying on others. It's really nice to have your own independence".



Alexis – Transition to Work, Gladstone, QLD

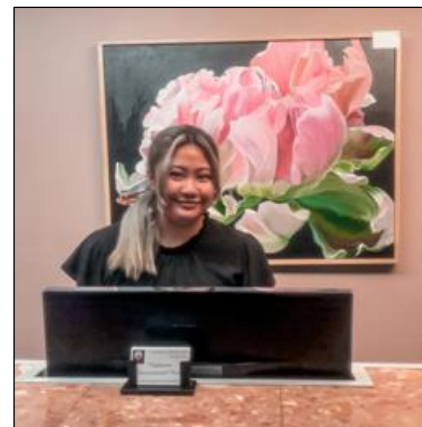
Alexis commenced with National Joblink Transition to Work in March 2022 after completing year 10. She had some personal barriers she wanted to overcome and with the support of her NJL Mentor Louise, she was referred to several support services. Even though she had a lot going on in her personal life Alexis was still keen to work with Louise to find employment and attended several work preparation activities where Louise assisted Alexis to develop her resume and cover letter and assisted her with job applications.

In September 2022, Louise could see how invested Alexis was in working towards a better future and thought she may like to become involved in the Youth Future Summit in Gladstone where young people aged 16-25 had the opportunity to discuss ideas and actions they would like to see in their community. Alexis also applied for CQ University STEPS Course which she was successful in gaining a position in commencing late 2022.

Alexis's confidence continued to build and she took the steps to book herself into a local free mental health first aid certificate, which she stated she really enjoyed. Her mentor suggested Alexis consider volunteering and supported her in selecting an activity and organisation which interested her.

Alexis chose to volunteer with Zonta Club, a not-for-profit organisation who create birthing kits for underprivileged communities. Following her success in her volunteering, Alexis said she was feeling more confident and decided to apply with Highpoint International Hotel for a receptionist position. Alexis was hired on the spot and started work with them in August 2023. Her mentor negotiated a wage subsidy with Alexis's employer and supported Alexis with fuel to attend work as well as work clothing.

Alexis has finished her training in her role now and was excited to tell her mentor she has received a pay rise. She has also decided to fast track the completion of her STEPS course by the end of Feb 2024, 4 months earlier than intended, so that she can apply for a Bachelor of Engineering degree with CQ University.



Montannah – Transition to Work, Launceston, TAS

Montannah has only been with National Joblink and Transition to Work for a short 4 months but has knocked down several barriers since she commenced. Montannah attended her first 2-3 appointments with her partner as she was not comfortable attending on her own, after this Montannah was attending her appointments weekly on her own.

All Mentors in Launceston supported Montannah on her journey, Montannah took full advantage of the driving lessons at NJL and was able to complete her hours and was successful in passing her P's test with Driving ambitions. Montannah had no career goals and completed her RSA, as she had been offered a casual position in a bottle shop. After that fell through Montannah had decided she wanted to pursue a career in traffic control.

Montannah then went on to complete her White Card, Control traffic with stop-slow bat and Implement Traffic Management Plans course. Upon completion of her course's Montannah's mentor assisted with reaching out to Rhonda at K.A.G Enterprises and passed on Montannah's resume. Montannah was then offered paid employment after meeting with Rhonda in the NJL office for an interview the following day.

TtW supported Montannah with the required PPE and transport for her to commence work at short notice. Montannah has been working a lot of hours and really enjoying her new job.

MEET THE TEAM



Sam Palmer – *Transition to Work Mentor, Launceston, TAS*

Hi, My name is Sam and I have worked for National Joblink Since January 2022 in the TtW Program. During this time, I have enjoyed watching participants grow and overcome many barriers, My favourite part of the job would be no day is the same.

Over the years I have worked in many different industries and roles from Hospitality, Retail, Labouring, Aged care and disability support. I have a wife and two sons Mason (7) and Sonny (1). During my spare time I enjoy Road trips, camping and spending time with my family and our two dogs and getting new tattoos. Summer would be my favourite time of year as I love the hot weather and of course a cold beer!

Louise Laing – *Transition to Work Mentor, Gladstone, GLD*

I have previously worked in education, child safety and the community services sector before starting work with NJL in Jan 2021 as an EST trainer/mentor. In March 2022, I transferred to TTW as a mentor in a full-time role. I love connecting with young people in our programs, and all the good work we do to progress people into employment or education opportunities.

As part of my ongoing studies, and self-development, I was proud to say that I graduated from my Bachelor of Criminology and Criminal Justice degree, with Griffith University in July this year.

Now that I have finished full time studies, I am enjoying spending more time with my family and dogs, who all think it's strange to have time with me on the weekends, and not with my head in books.

In my spare time, I enjoy spending the day in my garden and having a glass of wine to relax. I am looking forward to spending Christmas with my 5 grandchildren, 5 children and their partners, my parents, and siblings, travelling to Adelaide, and eating lots of cheese.



Lee-Ann Kendal – *Transition to Work Mentor, Devonport, TAS*

Hiya , I'm Lee-Anne from the Devonport office. I have been with NJL since August 2021 as a mentor in TTW, and I have also just started in the ParentsNext program doing 1 day a week. I find doing this job very rewarding especially when our participants gain the confidence and belief in themselves to step out of their comfort zone and grow.

Outside of work I am a Life Coach that specialises in manifestation and empowering people to change their lives . In following my own practices this has enabled me to move to Tasmania from WA 5 years ago and I have recently just purchased my very first home for me and my daughter which I am so proud of! Now I look forward to becoming a crazy cat lady.