

Flexi Flyer

Term 2 June 2022



Every Student Matters - Find the Greatness Within



HEAD OF CAMPUS UPDATE

Welcome to Term 2 Flexi Flyer.

By the time this newsletter goes out we will have wrapped up Semester 1 and reached the halfway point of the year. Thank you for all your support in getting your child ready for school and supporting their learning. We know that wellbeing and engagement are important parts of your child's life at school and we, at Flexi do pride ourselves on keeping a close eye on our young persons' progress and their wellbeing through our intensive case management and wrap around support.

We do this by a collaborative approach involving a multi-disciplinary team of support staff which has been shown to improve young people's attendance percentage, engagement in academic and industry programs as well as wellbeing. Just a reminder, young people can access the support services team by making an appointment through Julie, our Office Manager or a referral through their case manager. Flexi teachers and support staff work together with parents/carers and valued community groups to support all young people throughout their senior years in schooling. It is clear that Toowoomba Flexi School has a rich history of genuine care and concern for all our young people, that participate in our program.

At the end of each academic year, Flexi conducts a post-school follow up survey which helps gauge individual views and experiences, providing graduate's opinions and behaviours that can be used to make important decisions and changes if required. This feedback below provided by a graduate of 2020 always resonates with me, "Flexi has given me the strength I need and I know I can face anything". I always appreciate our family's contribution to our schools' culture and welcome you to discuss any issues with us, by phone or by making an appointment. May you all have a safe and relaxing break and I look forward to seeing and working with you in Term 3.

Shout Out to Friends of Flexi

A "shout out" to our Friends of Flexi, Toowoomba Fresh for your kind donations of fresh produce which contributes towards our daily Food Program. Our Food Program ensures our young people receive a warm nutritious meal each day. Not only is this a wonderful service we provide to our young people each school day, but these items also contribute to their health, wellbeing and learning stamina.

Thank you to Meals on Wheels Toowoomba for the kind donations of pre-prepared meals to our Flexi School Campus. These meals will support our Helping Hand Meals Program. Our Helping Hand Meals are provided to our young people and their families in times of need. We have provided meals to families relocating homes to reduce stress at this time and to those experiencing financial concerns to assist with the significant increase of food costs. These meals provided by Meals on Wheels to Flexi School supports the No One Goes Hungry in Our Community initiative.

Last, and certainly not least, our Friends of Flexi and resident chefs Allan and Ray, our entire community acknowledges the generous contributions you make. Chef Allan and Chef Ray, we celebrate you and recognise the vital work you bring as volunteers we are so very grateful for the both of you. Throughout Term 2 our community has celebrated National Volunteer Week by saying thank you to our volunteers that selflessly give their time to us. We hope Allan and Ray and all our volunteers feel valued every day and especially during National Volunteers Week.



HEAD OF CAMPUS UPDATE (continued)

Mentoring Moments

The Flexi Mentoring Program returned with great anticipation in Term 2 after the required closure due to COVID. Flexi currently has 32 very committed and generous with their time mentors actively participating in the program, with all having completed the compulsory Student Protection Training.

The 50-minute mentoring sessions have run each Monday and Tuesday throughout the term in The Glen Postle Intergenerational Mentoring Hub. As mentoring coordinator, I am privileged to witness the core of the program each week, which is a reciprocal one-to-one mentoring relationship that supports a young person to reach their full potential, which in turn can make a positive difference to their wellbeing and future.

Our young people over and over again benefit from having a trusted adult role model in their lives. Toowoomba Flexi School Mentoring Program is now into its 11th year and has been proven to increase our young peoples' wellbeing and encouraged student engagement. Flexi's Mentoring Program must acknowledge and are proud to partner with The Old Mens Network Inc. (TOMNET) to provide this opportunity to our young people.



John Armstrong House Anniversary

I also wish to acknowledge John Armstrong this month, it was 11 years ago on Thursday 2 June 2011, Mayor Peter Taylor dedicated the building that Flexi School uses as "John Armstrong House" in memory of John Armstrong who died in 2010.

John Armstrong played a significant role in establishing Flexi School on its current site in Chalk Drive. The building was originally located in Neil Street where the Armstrong Auto Group now have their used car yard. It was the old Telstra Training Centre and it was John's idea to move it to Chalk Drive.



John Armstrong appears on our Wall of Flexi Greats, I encourage you to have a read of his story and the contribution he made to our wonderful school.



Flexi Intergenerational Gardening Project

Mentor Chris is our resident kitchen-garden guru on campus. Chris works closely with Kobi in our extensive vegetable garden that Kobi has helped design, maintain and harvest. Chris has been involved with the Intergenerational Gardening Project since 2019 and continues to expand this program and is a valued community volunteer at Flexi. We look forward to the expansion of the Flexi Intergenerational Gardening Project and together continue to prepare fresh, nutritious and delicious food for our community from our garden.



May you all have a safe and relaxing break, and I look forward to working with you into Term 3.

Sincerely,

Linda Bourke | Head of Campus

TRIBUTE TO 2019 GRADUATE JARED

Dear members of the Flexi School Community,

It is with a very heavy heart that I inform you of the passing of Jared Schneider, a former student and graduate of Toowoomba Flexi School. Jared completed years 10, 11 and 12 at Flexi and was a part of the graduating class of 2019.

Jared whilst at Flexi achieved numerous qualifications and awards:

- Year 10 Encouragement Award
- The John Armstrong Bursary Achievement
- Recognition of Outstanding Accumulations of QCE Credit Points
- Represented Toowoomba Flexi School as a TRC Regional Youth Leader.

Jared was everything that Flexi represents and he always had time for everyone. His vivacious personality, his gentle soul and his humour was encapsulating. For those that knew Jared we ask that you remember and celebrate his life and I know you join me in extending our heartfelt sympathy to Jared's family. He will forever be in our hearts and shine bright on the Flexi School Community.

Linda Bourke, Head of Campus.

Those in our community that feel affected by the loss of this student can reach out to the school for additional support.



2022 WHOLE SCHOOL CAMP

This year 45 young people and 7 staff went to Alexandra Headlands for 3 fun filled days of challenges, adventures and team building activities on our Whole School Camp. Activities over the 3 days were run by "Character Builders" and started off with "Boot Camp" – an activity that got everyone's blood pumping.

Highlights of the camp included the beach activities and the night time beach walk. It was such a pleasure to see all the young people participate in the activities and develop new skills and friendships. A huge thanks to all of the wonderful Flexi staff that made the camp possible.



FLEXI CAREERS OFFICE

Term 2 has seen the Year 10 young people head out on work experience and connecting with the community. This term work experience focused on giving back to community organisations that have supported Flexi through donations.

Throughout the 3 week placement, the young people had the opportunity to further develop their workplace skills such as communication, team work and taking initiative. During the placement young people were folding, pricing and hanging clothing donations, preparing and packing meals as well as serving customers and interacting with other staff.

It was also an opportunity for young people to connect with community members and observe the supports that operate in our Toowoomba community.

A huge congratulations to all the Year 10 young people for your commitment and enthusiasm whilst on placement. It was an absolute pleasure for all Flexi staff to attend industry visits and gather such positive feedback from the placement providers.

Thank you to the following organisations for hosting our young people, your support and generosity is appreciated: Food Assist, Lifeline Darling Downs and South West Queensland, Meals on Wheels and The Base Services.



Taegan Gloss |
Industry Liaison Officer

INDUSTRY CONNECT



YEAR 10 REFLECTION

This term the Year 10s have been involved in a plethora of programs such as work experience, Top Blokes and JAYA. In weeks 7-9 the Year 10s were placed in various work placements within numerous community organisations including; Meals on Wheels, Food Assist, Lifeline and The Base Services.

It was wonderful to see our young people giving back to the community but also attaining the necessary work skills to enhance their resume's and readiness for the workplace. Top Blokes and the JAYA programs also benefited the students with regard to their well-being and self-confidence.

Top Blokes is a mentoring program which ran for the entirety of Semester 1 which included 18 workshops covering social issues that may impact young men's health including: the overuse of alcohol and other drugs, fostering positive mental health, anger management, peer pressure and risk taking, sexual health, leadership and teamwork.

The Jaya program was facilitated by our Guidance Officer, Chris Taylor, and focused on such topics of building trust and self-confidence, self-worth, empathy as well as being present and respectful.



Wendy Ellem | Year 10
Case Manager

WELLNESS WORKER UPDATE

Hello, my name is Melanie and I am the Wellbeing Worker at Toowoomba Flexi School. I provide support to students and parents in a multitude of ways to ensure the social and emotional wellbeing of our young people. This support is tailored to the need of each young person and involves supporting them through conflicts with their friends, helping young people to book and attend GP and psychologist appointments and helping young people and their families to have access to housing, food and warm clothes. I have also helped several young people to gain their Tax File Numbers and navigate the Centrelink process.

On Tuesday 17 May, Flexi students and staff celebrated and brought awareness to the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia IDAHOBIT. Throughout this day posters and other materials were given to students and placed around the campus to promote inclusivity.

On Thursday 23 June in Week 10 Flexi will be hosting a Community Fun Day with lunchtime activities. A number of different community organisations including Downs Industries School Co-op (DISCO), Civic Assist, EACH, PCYC and the Toowoomba Fire and Emergency Services will be hosting stalls during lunch to promote the support and opportunities that they offer to young people in the Toowoomba Region.



Melanie Berry |
Wellbeing Worker

YEAR 11 REFLECTION

The Year 11 cohort has had a wonderful Semester 1 with young people successfully starting on their Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) journey. The young people have become familiar with their QCE tracking and have an excellent understanding of the requirements for QCE attainment and how they are going to achieve their QCE. It is wonderful to see these young adults taking control over their learning.



Julian Booth | Year 11 Case Manager

DAY FOR DOLLY

On Friday, 13 May we celebrated Day for Dolly. We took a moment to explain the background of the foundation and as a school community to take a stand against bullying and to spread kindness. Young people and staff each wrote on a 'Dolly Butterfly' their messages of kindness and collected a Dolly's Dream corporate partner, Smiggle "Choose Kindness" keyring. We were grateful to have representatives from the Centenary Heights SHS Student Council, Shauna, Tiana, Kya and Brianna join us for lunch.



PUSH UP CHALLENGE

This year Flexi has again joined the Push-UP Challenge for Mental Health. The Push-Up Challenge has participants completing 3,139 push-ups over 24 days to raise awareness and funds for mental health. It all kicked off on June 1.

The 3,139 push-ups represent the number of Australians who took their own lives in 2020 and shine a spotlight on mental health. The daily push-up target changes each day to reflect a vital mental health statistic, so along the way you'll learn about mental health.

To donate and support our cause, visit "Team Flexi" on the "Push-up Challenge" website.



YEAR 12 REFLECTION

The Year 12 Young People participated in a series of activities centred around gaining clarity in what they can do and achieve in life, where this might lead them, identifying core strengths and finding their path. The skills our 12's developed will be carried with them for life. As we approach the final stages of our formal education we will have some fun and start leaving our legacy behind. We are going to work, play, and learn hard and have fun in the process. Through our continued daily interactions, we will continue to prove there is no "I" in "TEAM." Our class goal will be to work together towards a fantastic and successful school year! I have high expectations for all of the young people and I am committed to assisting them with the expectations required of each of their subjects and what lies beyond these Flexi walls.

"Make Your Mark - 12 Steps to discovering your vision, being your best self and leaving a legacy Workshop" was a wonderful experience that our Year 12's participated in recently. We were joined by Jessica Ritchie who is a multi-award winning brand and marketing expert.



Renee O'Sullivan |
Year 12 Case Manager

ANZAC DAY

Year 12 students attended an ANZAC Service at Centenary Heights State High School on April 22, where the students reflected and acknowledged the servicemen and women who gallantly and bravely served our country.

On ANZAC Day our Seniors, Sarah and Grant, and staff represented Toowoomba Flexi School at the Mother's Memorial service.



AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST MORNING TEA

Flexi Café and Catering hosted Australia's Biggest Morning Tea to raise awareness and help fund vital research and support services for those impacted by cancer. Not only was this a fundraising activity for the Cancer Council it allowed our young people to put their practical skills learned to great use. Our young people demonstrated hospitality skills on the day and were able to prepare, present and serve morning tea.

Our mentors enjoyed a long table morning tea on the back deck of the John Armstrong House served by several of our young people along with espresso coffee prepared by our inhouse Flexi barista, Charli.

As a community we raised over \$300, congratulations to everyone involved, another huge fundraising success!



TERM 2 SNAP SHOT





FLEXI SCHOOL OFFICE

14 - 16 Chalk Drive Toowoomba
Postal Address - 60 Ramsay Street Toowoomba

Phone: (07) 4614 4100
Fax: (07) 4614 4110

The Toowoomba Flexi School Office is open Monday to Friday 8am to 3pm

Toowoomba Flexi School wishes to thank supporting businesses and organisations!

