

New AEW at Huonville Primary School

Rhys Cordwell, from Cygnet, is the new Aboriginal education worker (AEW) at Huonville Primary School (HPS).

Rhys, a former employee of South East Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation (SETAC), began working at HPS in the first week of term three.

Rhys' mother, Lindy, is also a long term employee of SETAC, and Rhys said that he has always felt a strong connection to his Aboriginal community and culture.

The Department of Education believes that AEWs play a vital role in education for staff, students and the Aboriginal community.

An understanding of local culture and strong community ties can contribute to the improvement of educational outcomes for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students and AEWs are employed by schools to support teachers and Aboriginal students in the areas of academic achievement, participation, attendance, retention, pathways and in developing a rich curriculum inclusive of Aboriginal

content and perspectives across the curriculum.

Rhys will work at HPS two days a week with around 80 Aboriginal students, and he plans to make his programme very hands on.

He is hoping to introduce an extensive art and language programme and to build a relationship with the local Elders and Aunties.

"I'm lucky to have the connection with SETAC, they are a fantastic resource in this community," said Rhys.

"I spent a lot of time on country with Tess Strong from SETAC when I was younger and I know she will be a great help for me in this position."

Rhys is hoping to utilise the wetlands at the school and to develop a bush tucker garden, as well as a programme for building traditional tools.

Rhys is also employed by Kingston High School as an AEW for two days a week and he is available at HPS on Thursdays and Fridays, should you have any queries.



Rhys Cordwell is the new Aboriginal education worker at Huonville Primary School.

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Swinging into Backswing

The Colony 47 supported Backswing programme is underway in Huonville.

The Backswing programme is designed to support groups of young people to create and manage a campaign around a community issue that is important to them.

The inaugural Huonville programme, coordinated by Helen Merrick of Cygnet, will tackle the issue of harmful drug use in young people.

Backswing is an initiative of the Australian Government's Empowering YOUTH programme and is designed for unemployed young people aged between 15 and 24.

This is the first programme of its kind in southern Tasmania, and over the next two years Colony 47 will run eight groups through the programme, from Huonville, Sorell, Glenorchy and Hobart.

Each group will be supported by a community steering committee made up of industry experts, business representatives and community leaders who will provide guidance throughout the project.

Huonville's steering committee consists of Adriana Taylor, Huon Valley Council commissioner, Judi Cawthorn, manager Huonville Trade Training Centre, Lauren McGrow, Geeveston Community Centre (GeCo), Karen Tyler and Kim Beven, social workers, Huon Community Health Centre, James Jenkins, Drug Education Network (DEN) and Tony Baker, Huon Aquaculture.

The steering committee has given the group a brief outlining the campaign which offers an overview, focus, inspiration and target audience and culminates in a visual and verbal presentation to the committee at the end of the programme.

The group has a budget and must bring the project in under that budget.

The group currently has five members, and they are in the workshoping stage of the project.

Riley Anning, one of the programme participants, said that the group felt that an interactive approach to the brief would be more effective than an educational approach.

"We have been looking at games, like human jenga, as a way of getting the message across," he said.

"And we have been discussing opportunities for presenting the project, the Huon Show came up and we have been exploring the possibility of presenting it there."

Riley, who left college at the end of 2015 and has been looking for work ever since, said that his main motivation for joining the programme was to increase his chance of gaining full time employment, and he felt that Backswing would be a good addition to his resume.

Helen said that the programme also spent time on resume writing, practical licences and courses, such as first aid certificate and responsible service of alcohol, and on linking up with employers.

"It would be ideal to have some additional participants in the programme, we are likely to lose one or two to employment during the programme.

"We can certainly accept new members over the next couple of weeks, while we are still locking down ideas," said Helen.

Nathan Mohr, another member of the programme, said, "When I first heard about the programme, and the amount of work involved, it seemed a bit overwhelming.

"But once I got started and I could see how beneficial it was to what I need, it's so worth staying, and if you just take it week by week, the workload is not so bad."

For further information on the Backswing programme, or to express your interest, contact Donovan Szytura by email at donovan@turn.net.au



Workshopping ideas for the Backswing project, from left, Kindilan Hayes, Riley Anning, Donovan Szytura, Backswing coordinator, Nathan Mohr, Helen Merrick, trainer, and Nathan Sawyer.

Oliebollen festival

Saturday 9th of September 10am-2pm

- food stalls
- auction
- sweets
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- live music
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- satay
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