

HANDS ON LEARNING



**Daniel Ricciardo
makes our day**

54 reasons
Part of the Save the Children Australia Group

NEWS
Quarterly

April 2023



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Trained and ready to go

The new school year is an exciting time, and a delight to welcome so many new faces to the Hands on Learning (HoL) community. Induction training has been front and centre during first term as new HoL teams have been supported and trained in the HoL methodology at schools across Tasmania, Victoria, News South Wales, and Queensland.



Qld HoL School Support Manager Gillian Schroeder plans the new HoL precinct with the team at Chatsworth State School



Q+A with new artisan-teacher Bryce

Meet Bryce Jacobs, new artisan-teacher at Kurri Kurri High School in NSW.

What were you like as a student at school?
A Hands on Learning candidate.

Why did you become an educator?
A teacher made the extra effort to help guide me into a path where I could be an active member of society and not just cruise through life.

What's your favourite part of the job?
When the students have a 'eureka moment' and gain the understanding of a concept.

What part of the HoL methodology really resonates with you and why?
The structure of the day, meaningful projects and wholistic sense of pride and ownership of the projects.



Our Ambassador, our cover

After only being able to meet students online during COVID, it was super exciting for HoL Ambassador Daniel Ricciardo to finally experience HoL in person and join the team at Rowville Secondary College (see page 5).

Welcome to the HoL community

- Kurri Kurri High School, NSW
- Lockhart Central School, NSW
- Mullumbimby High School, NSW
- Temora High School, NSW
- Walcha Central School, NSW
- Bribie Island State High School, QLD
- Chatsworth State School, QLD
- Gleneagle State School, QLD
- Port Dalrymple School, TAS
- Wilmot Primary School, TAS
- Bundarra Primary School, VIC
- Chewton Primary School, VIC
- Crusoe College, VIC
- Koo Wee Rup Secondary College, VIC
- Lyndhurst Secondary College, VIC
- Mill Park Secondary College, VIC
- North East Flexible Learning Network Seymour/Shepparton/Wodonga, VIC
- Portland Secondary College, VIC
- Saint John's Primary School, Dennington, VIC
- St. Patrick's Primary School, Port Fairy VIC

Welcome Walcha Café



It's great to see the new HoL Café program in full swing at Walcha Central School after only a few weeks. The cohesive, motivated team are working so well together. Multiple dishes have been prepared, coffee orders taken and made, and students have delivered meals and drinks across the school, sparking many positive exchanges between staff and HoL members.

SAVE THE DATE


**BRIGHT
FUTURES**
HANDSON LEARNING
HoLCON 23

INSPIRING CONFERENCE
FOR SHARING BRIGHT
IDEAS AND CELEBRATING
PROGRAM SUCCESS

A professional learning opportunity for HoL artisan-teachers and school leadership to participate in tailored workshops to support best practice and enhance student outcomes

FRIDAY JUNE 16

VENUE:

The Views,
Life saving Victoria,
Port Melbourne

REGISTRATIONS
OPEN TERM 2

New year new projects

Real and significant projects are core to the HoL methodology. From mosaicking the school logo at the front of the school, to installing new walls in staff offices, to lending a hand in the community, HoL teams have hit the ground running in 2023 engaging in projects with purpose and meaning.



A school entry wall, complete with mosaic is a legacy from HoL students at Horsham Special School.

Leongatha Secondary College's new walls will add functionality to the art room offices.

Koroit and District Primary School students build a home for their mascot, Annie.

Jackson School HoL students have been very busy at the Diggers Rest Animal Farm decorating "shop fronts" to hide a water tank and old shed.



Upcycled treasure

Cohuna Secondary School's creativity knows no bounds. Recycling and repurposing building materials may be the heart of HoL, but have you ever heard of a new life for footy goals converted into posts to hold up a roof? According to artisan-teacher Matthew Hill, his team are driving the creation of their new HoL space from scratch, from recycled materials. "They pretty much have free rein within reason, with my support guiding them about what will work. That includes modifying an old farm gate adding HoL letters from scrap materials, a new fence to enclose their space, installing taps for running water, modifying the trusses, the walls, the frame, EVERYTHING. The problem solving, cooperation, creativity and persistence on display is inspiring."



Enhancing your precinct

Shaping your HoL precinct into a safe space to experience belonging and connection is at the heart of what makes HoL successful. Most feature a central table to share meals and reflection, many have a pizza oven, and all provide a discrete space ensuring students feel part of a cohesive group that works together to construct something tangible.



Batemans Bay High School, NSW



Western Port Secondary College, VIC



Lavington Public School, NSW



Catholic Regional College St Albans, VIC



St Francis Xavier College, Officer, VIC



Padua, Tyabb, VIC

Smiles all round



Our Ambassador, Daniel Ricciardo, swung by Rowville Secondary College to meet the team and experience HoL firsthand. [Padua College student Harper](#) joined the crew to meet his hero. [ABC News](#) covered the visit and also filmed Padua College's Tyabb precinct and interviewed students, staff and parents.



Photo by Rebecca Turnbull



"Learning to problem solve, work well in a team and discovering what you're really passionate about are all valuable life lessons that have served me well in the driver's seat, but not all of these lessons were learned in the classroom! As a student I struggled to consistently engage in class, but take me outside and give me a project to work on with my hands and I was a totally different kid. These days, we know that not everyone learns in the same way and that's why I think Hands on Learning is such an important program. It makes sure kids who risk falling through the gaps of mainstream education get the same opportunities to succeed as the kids who thrive in the classroom. The evidence is all there - from the kids who re-engage with education after joining Hands on Learning, the teachers who support them to grow and the parents who see the positive changes in their children - this is a program that genuinely helps our future generations realise their passions and turn them to success".

Daniel Ricciardo



Tasmanian growth

The Tasmanian government is investing \$783,000 to double the number of HoL schools over the next three years. This significant investment builds upon three years of seed funding to grow and support HoL in Tasmania by the Tasmanian Community Fund and the Department of Education, Children and Young People.



Winnaleah District High School are proud of their functional greenspace with compost bays, handmade garden beds and pallet seating. Made complete with thier upside down scarecrow.



Students at Illawarra Primary working on their outdoor sink project, designed and completed by students. It is fantastic to see their precinct growing with each and every visit.

Building hope

Our 2022 aggregated data collection continues to demonstrate Hands on Learning's practical approach to improve educational outcomes, increase belonging and student wellbeing.

Lived experience and the constant media spotlight on the cost of living, the state of the environment and a general sense of poor mental health can challenge the most optimistic of us to stay that way. For our children, with less life experience and perspective, it's somewhat fair to ask "what's the point?". Unfortunately, students seem to be expressing this through their behaviour and school attendance.

New data released by the Productivity Commission shows "the rate of children staying home from school, whether for mental health or illness, is on the rise." ([ABC report](#)) This is being acknowledged as a key issue by the [National School Reform Agreement](#) which "recommends redesigning the agreement to focus more attention on lifting students' academic results and supporting students' wellbeing". This concept has been the hallmark of Hands on Learning since its inception: students will achieve more if they feel connected and purposeful.

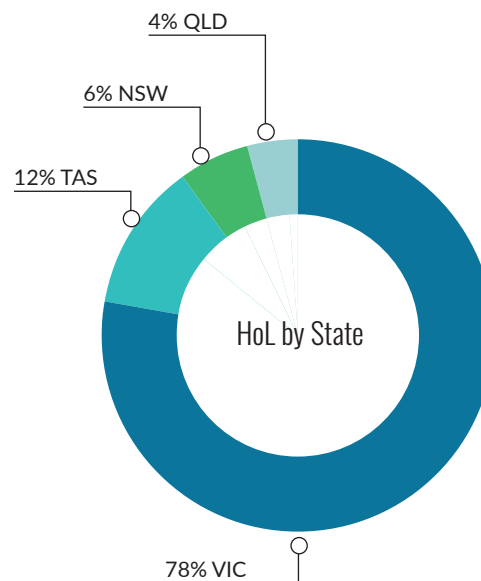
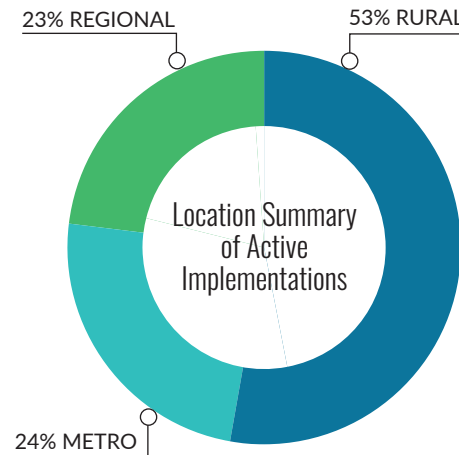
HoL Impact, Evaluation and Analytics Lead,
Steve Schneider

2022 growth

A year which offered so much hope coming out the other side of the pandemic, seemed instead to place additional hurdles in everyone's path. Despite this, schools recognised the need for a supportive program like Hands on Learning (HoL) resulting in 34 schools commencing a program in 2022.

With a return to onsite learning there was a resultant re-emergence of data being collected and students entering the program in 2022. 2441 participated in HoL, 80 per cent of them being new to the program.

2441
Students participated
in HoL in 2022



Attendance through the roof

Principal Rachael Buck moved quickly to introduce HoL when she started at Newcomb Primary School, after witnessing the outcomes for her students at Noorat Primary School.

The impact has been significant. "We have a growing waiting list of students with attendance going through the roof as students prosecute their case for inclusion or work hard to sustain their existing place in the team.

The prevalence of disengagement is much higher now than it used to be. Ten years ago, we didn't see the same amount of mental health and attendance issues in primary schools.

The importance of fostering wellbeing and spending time with an adult, sharing a meal together, and talking around the table is so important. Families seem to have less time together, and those incidental literacy, numeracy and social skills are not taught as much at home these days.

Hands on Learning is probably the only thing that is out of the classroom that features the same amount of learning – if not more. Yes, the students are out of the classroom for the day, but I guarantee the learning is just as great. Practical literacy and numeracy improves, and the growth in social and emotional skills is huge. We see real improvements in behaviour regulation as a result of role models in the group and that is translated back into the classroom."



Belonging and purpose

The 'why' to this uptake was the acknowledgement that HoL offers a place for students to feel like they belong, and that they felt a sense of purpose working with others to achieve something of value. Looking at referral patterns, the main reasons students were entering the program was a general lack of school engagement, a need to develop resilience and using an innate interest in practical work to spark this. This also highlighted HoL students having low self-confidence and struggling academically. Using HoL as an early intervention allowed those students to cope with current pressures, developing a set of social and emotional skills to work their way to a better way of being, and re-engaging them with school. 30% of HoL students gave a 1-2 response ("not at all") for enjoying school on starting the program, which dropped to 13% of HoL students after at least two terms of involvement. 83%* of HoL students reported feeling confident to try new things, with 69%* feeling that their learning in the classroom had improved as well.

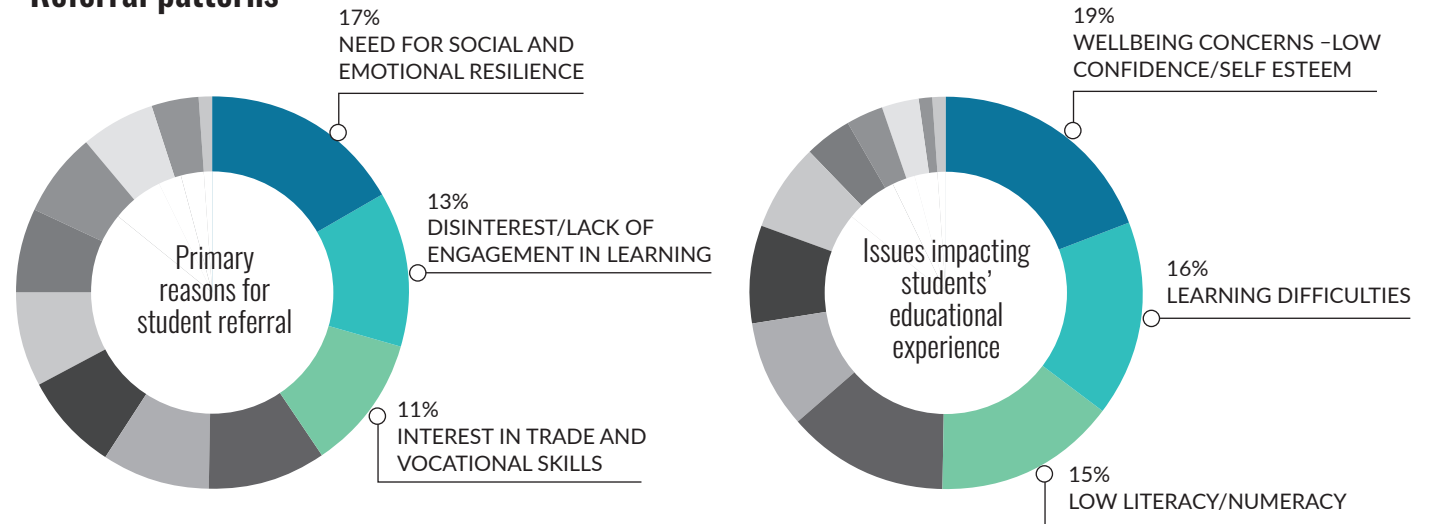
Improvement in school learning, confidence and engagement

Non-HoL school staff saw this transition of learning and application to other areas of student's schooling even more clearly. 84%* of staff reported improvements in students' ability to work with others, 73%* reported an improvement in classroom learning and there was a improvement in school attendance for 68%* of students. From this we can see the pillars of HoL – a place to belong, people to belong to, purposeful project work and giving back – is having a tangible impact on student wellbeing. Indeed, HoL parents reported that 92%* of children felt a greater sense of belonging and confidence, with 97%* stating HoL played a role in supporting their child's overall wellbeing.

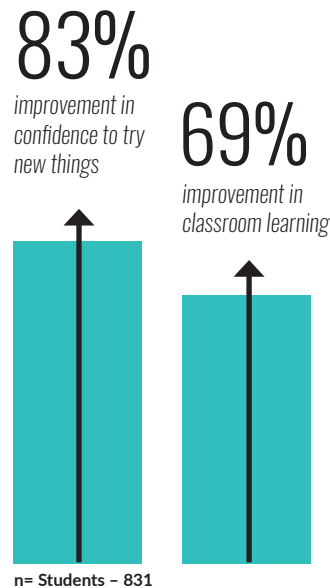
With growing interest in and demand for HoL, and such documented evidence showing the impacts of it, shows that when correctly implemented in partnership with the HoL School Support Team the program can only help improve the future prospects of more Australian youth.

* if reported as an issue on beginning HoL.

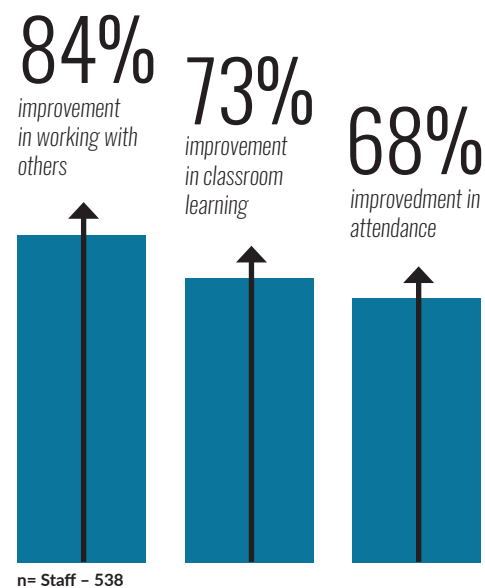
Referral patterns



Students



Staff




Parents



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 0413 426 376

 www.handsonlearning.org.au

 hol@savethechildren.org.au

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