

LATROBE VALLEY

Mountain Track

PROGRAM

PROSPECTUS

For Community Stakeholders and our
Supporter



MOUNTAIN TRACK

Mountain Track is a community led long-term intervention program made up of supportive individuals and great mentors who walk alongside our young people; helping them develop strong foundations to set them on positive life pathways. We believe that to do the best by our young people it's incumbent on us to never give up on them.

www.mountaintrack.org

SUMMARY

The Mountain Track Program is a long-term intervention program for vulnerable young people. It is designed to be there for young people for as long as it takes to get them on positive life pathways. At its core is the idea that one of the most important elements in achieving this is access to strong, ongoing, nurturing relationships. An effective approach that the BackTrack program in Armadale, NSW, has proven over in its over 19 years of operation.

The Mountain Track program combines the elements of nature immersion and community integration with a foundation of positive ongoing relationships to help vulnerable young members of the Latrobe Valley find their way towards safety, belonging and wellbeing in life.

Community is at the heart of this program, as is continuous improvement. So we ask that you please read through this document and consider how you might like to be involved in this program that will not only change the lives of our young people, but also help shape the Latrobe Valley community.

OUR STORY

Background

The economic evolution of the Latrobe Valley from electricity generating powerhouse to its present state of an 11.3% unemployment rate in Morwell¹, more than 3 times the national rate², is well documented, and in fact '(a)s far back as the 1960s and '70s, the Central Gippsland Trades and Labour Council began calling for a genuine transition plan to diversify the region's economy, create new industries and re-focus industrial development on achieving good community and environmental outcomes'³.

Research⁴ into the effects of the privatisation of the energy industry on the Latrobe Valley highlights that the Latrobe Valley power industry shrunk by approximately 8,400 jobs between 1988 and 2001. With an estimated economic multiplier of 2.5-4 jobs for each power industry job, the job losses in the area from privatisation between 1989-2005 are estimated to be between 21,000 and 33,000⁵. Against a population that has oscillated around the low 70,000s⁶ since 1991.

¹ Jobs and Skills Australia – Small Area Labour Markets, June quarter 2023

² Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, June Quarter 2023,

³ Birrel, Bob Professor - *Latrobe Valley: Victim of Industrial Restructuring*, Centre for Population and Urban Research Monash University September, 2001

⁴ Wragg, Cheryl and Gibbons, Peter, submission 132 to the Economics Reference Committee Inquiry into Regional Inequality in Australia.

<https://www.aph.gov.au/DocumentStore.ashx?id=07699955-82da-46e1-b0a0-925e34cfe4a8&subId=673446>

⁵ *ibid*

⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics, population estimates and components by SA2 1991 to 2022

As jobs left the region, so too did those who could find work elsewhere, with more than 5000 residents leaving Latrobe Valley between 1990 and 2005⁷. Leaving behind a disadvantaged community, that continues to feel the effects of those job losses today. In the 2021 census the Latrobe Local Government Area (LGA) was one of only two Victorian LGAs to be in the bottom quintile, nationally, on the ABS's Socio-Economic Index for Areas⁸.

Complementing this dire economic change were a lack of government policies to help the transition,⁹. While other policies, such as welfare dumping¹⁰, exacerbated the area's socioeconomic decline.

You don't have to look far to find more statistics to support the need for assistance in the Latrobe Valley, and luckily over the last decade help has increasingly begun to come in. With organisations and programs like the Latrobe Valley Authority, ReActivate Latrobe Valley, ReBoot and Ladder Step Up Latrobe Valley among others. But whatever way you look at it, or who you talk to, it's clear there is still more work to be done.

Enter our co founders: David Butler and Laura Myer. They have spent years following their passion of working with at-risk young people. From running programs like the Operation Flinders Foundation 8-day program to Evolve and Tall Ships, their decades of experience in the industry has seen them develop a clear understanding of what makes a great youth intervention program.

It became clear to them that what young people needed is ongoing support. Be that in the form of knowing they can reach out to someone they trust when in need, or programs they can access on an ongoing manner when life doesn't go as planned. That is, a long-term intervention program. Whilst there is clearly a place for short term intervention, our co founders believe there is also significant community need for long-term youth intervention program. On their journey to develop Mountain Track our co-founders came across BackTrack, a youth intervention program based in Armadale, NSW, and found the final pieces of the puzzle for their program. And thus designed the Mountain Track program to meet the needs of the Latrobe Valley.

Mountain Track Inspiration

Since school days, our co founder, Laura Myer, has been more or less immersed in the youth sector. Working with young people from a wide range of backgrounds in a number of different settings. From young people in residential care, to those ensconced in the youth justice system, from young people facing drug and alcohol addictions to those experiencing homelessness, from those suffering from mental health conditions through to those with serious psychiatric illnesses.

⁷ Wragg and Gibbons, submission 132, 3

⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Australia 2021

⁹ Wragg and Gibbons, submission 132, 8

¹⁰ Wragg and Gibbons, submission 132, 4

Laura has a degree in youth work, but credits much of her knowledge to working with young people and the great challenges some of them face. From her time in the field and from a life full of pretty earth-shattering lessons it's abundantly clear that what matters to young people more than almost anything else is access to healthy, ongoing, nurturing relationships. These relationships are everything and must form the basis of any effective youth program.

Outside building healthy, ongoing, nurturing relationships, another core component of the Mountain Track Program, nature based immersion, has been inspired by Laura's experience of wilderness immersion programs, particularly in the United States. Through those programs Laura discovered how many young people respond well to being out in nature, immersed in the wilderness whilst being accompanied by good people. When young people are able to operate in a novel environment and experience safe healthy relationships in that setting, it creates a situation where a person is able to grow in ways that can blow you away.

Our other co founder, David Butler, has a background in trade and militarily, you name it he can probably build or create it. Fair to say Dave's experienced some of life's true extremes on a personal and professional level. Working with young people is where his great passion lies, he never feels more alive than when working with this cohort of vulnerable individuals. Giving young people chances, opportunities, his full backing and unwavering support is what David is all about.

David's creativity is a driving force behind Mountain Track. And instrumental to his ability to problem-solve for young people. You will never see him more in his element than when he is combining these skills while working with young people.

Community Engagement

With an understanding of the issues the Latrobe Valley faced and a clear desire to create a program that could make a long-term difference to the region, our founders began getting to know the local community once they moved here in 2016. From attending events like the Festival of Big Ideas to those held by the Latrobe Youth Network, Baw Baw Youth Network; to being part of the bushfire recovery committee; and hosting programs on their Jumbuk Park property run by the likes of Ladder Step Up Latrobe Valley, Blackwood School, Youth Space, Kickback Youth Program, Berry Street and Gippsland Adventure Therapy.

In addition to these, they also directly approached organisations like Kunai College; local community businesses, councillors and hubs; and the Morwell Pro-active police unit to develop an understanding of the community's needs.

As a result the program now has support from their local neighbourhood, local council (through the Latrobe Youth Network), Kurnai College, Morwell Pro-active police unit, local business owners, members of the Returned Service League, Churchill Community Hub, as well as more

broadly the BackTrack network.

We are continuing to grow this support through upcoming meetings with MP Melina Bath, the Gippsland office of Victorian Legal Aid, and the Latrobe Learning and Employment Network.

All our interactions and work with the local community over the last seven years have revealed the community need for early (ages 12-15), long-term intervention programs, and thus we have tailored Mountain Track to meet this need.

Organisational Set-Up

Mountain Track will work on a nature based, relationship centred and community integrated model, designed to help bolster the life chances and alter the life course for vulnerable, disadvantaged and disengaged young people in the Latrobe Valley Region.

Mountain Track is a long-term youth intervention program based on the Backtrack Youth Works Model. Backtrack has been running out of Armidale Northern NSW for over 19 years with a proven record of getting at-risk young people into employment, education, good, healthy relationships and out of the youth justice system. The difference between us and Backtrack will be our use of nature based programs. We will otherwise be working under the same dictum of 'whatever it takes for as long as it takes'.

To date Mountain Track has incorporated, registered with the ATO, begun implementing the systems and processes necessary to run the program as well as recruiting board members and prospective employees. We are also well on the way to achieving Not-For-Profit, Deductible Gift Recipient and Public Benevolent Institutions statuses.

Our Vision

We envision a world where vulnerable young people can access the support and mentorship they need for as long as they need to set them on positive life pathways.

Our Mission

To help those young people having a tough time to find their belonging.

Our Purpose

Our purpose is to provide direct relief of the vulnerability, misfortune and disadvantage experienced by young people in crisis, including those at risk of disengagement from the education system and/or engaged with the youth justice system.

Our Goals are to:

- A. to create positive change and help alter the life course for youth at risk in Australia;
- B. to re engage young people with their communities and help them achieve their personal goals; and
- C. to mentor other communities to best deliver services and programs that make a difference in the lives of young people that are vulnerable, disadvantaged and experiencing misfortune.

Our Approach

Our philosophy is to consistently be there for the youth of the Latrobe Valley for as long as it takes to build strong foundations and set them on positive life pathways.

Through a participatory community development approach, Mountain Track prioritises providing young people with healthy, ongoing, nurturing relationships, in a nature based setting that focuses on giving them skills and helping them to find a sense of belonging and purpose in their community.

Our Practice Principles are:

- Focus – it's all about the young people
- The extra mile: we value people who go above and beyond for the young person to make sure their needs are met
- We practise unconditional positive regard
- Actions not words - we show each other who we are through our actions, not our words
- Belonging and connection - we support our youth to find their place in the world through helping them find connection, meaning, purpose and through developing their sense of self
- Strength focused approach: we recognise, appreciate and thoroughly celebrate their strengths, talents, abilities as well as who they are as individuals. We encourage them to utilise and master their strengths and call on them when pursuing their passions.
- Integrity – we do what we say we will
- Respect – we listen, are respectful and non-judgmental
- Skill – our workers, mentors and volunteers are well trained and experienced in their areas of expertise
- Creativity – we go with the flow, are flexible and able to adapt and change to make sure we are meeting the needs of our young people
- Reflection – we are all about continuous improvement, learning and understanding

Mountain Track Initial Program Proposal

Target Ages and Areas

Mountain Track will take a focused approach to establishing a long-term youth intervention program for young people across the Latrobe Valley. Initially we will start off with a group of less than 10 young men aged 12-15 from the Latrobe Valley area, namely Morwell and Churchill.

The at risk young people will be identified as having high levels of school truancy, suspensions or expulsions, having past or present criminal charges, drug use problems and / or other serious life challenges that are making engagement in education very difficult. By starting our program focused on this cohort, in time we will be able to steadily build our organisational capacity to provide opportunities to both genders and larger cohorts of participants from across the Latrobe Valley area.

Given our initial limited capacity Mountain Track has opted to limit our program intake to 12-15 year-olds. While the adolescent years generally are identified as a time of significant vulnerability, Hemphill and Smith also identified 'the middle and early adolescent years (10-14 years), before violent and antisocial behaviour have become entrenched in young people's lives, as a potent opportunity for positive intervention'¹¹.

It is a particularly important time as young people move from primary to secondary education because the influence of peer groups assume greater importance relative to family influences such as parental authority and supervision at this time.

Moreover, Mountain Track has identified other youth service providers in the Latrobe Valley already targeting older adolescents. For these reasons, 12-15 yr olds are Mountain Track's target age group.

Program Model and Attributes

Mountain Track will start in the first half of 2024 by running an introduction to Mountain Track phase onsite at Jumbuk Park with a focus on building strong relationships between potential Mountain Track participants and Mountain Track mentors.

Each potential Mountain Track participant will be invited to participate in 3 or more introductory day sessions at Jumbuk Park designed to introduce them to the Mountain Track team, the Jumbuk Park property and the Mountain Track Program. During these sessions they will be engaging in hands-on-learning projects in their areas of interest, designed to compliment the FLO School Learning curriculum. As part of these introductory sessions they will also be invited to participate in some of the adventure activities offered on site at Jumbuk Park through the

¹¹ Hemphill, S.A. & Smith, R. *Preventing youth violence: What does and doesn't work and why? An overview of the evidence on approaches and programs.* Canberra, ARACY, 2010

Mountain Track Program.

From there if participants choose to go on with the program they can go one of two ways; firstly they can continue on as a core day program participant. This involves engaging in the hands-on learning and outdoor activities on offer at Mountain Track. They can participate in the core day program as often and for as long as they like. If they choose to participate in the Mountain Track core day program it will function as an extension / complimentary option to the FLO School hands on learning program. In other words participants can be engaged in hands-on-learning at either location depending on their needs and what holds their interest. Their preference may change day to day. Our first aim is always to have them engaged in school, however if this is not an option, then rather than disengage from the education system entirely we'd rather have them up and learning with us.

Secondly, they will have the option of signing on to the four week wilderness immersion program. The wilderness immersion program, set in a bush camp on the remote part of the Jumbuk Park property, is designed to give the participants some strong foundations to help them thrive in the Mountain Track Program and when heading into their next stages of life. This wilderness therapy program is designed to help our participants build and strengthen relationships, manage emotions, help instil responsibility, build confidence, build optimism, and develop coping skills. Whilst the challenging wilderness setting allows for some extraordinary personal development.

Once participants complete the Wilderness Immersion component they will either rejoin the core day program, go back to Kurnai FLO School or toggle between them.

From the age of fifteen, if participants stay engaged with the Mountain Track Program and demonstrate sufficient ability they will be eligible for the next phase of the Mountain Track Program: The Transition Program.

The Transition Program gives participants access to accredited and non-accredited job training and work experience across a range of different industries. Areas of work and learning they may get exposure to include, but are not limited to: trades, farming, hospitality, tourism, maintenance, creative arts, animal care, landscape work, gardening, cooking and cleaning.

During this phase our participants will begin to experience workdays as if they were on the job. They will be eased into the routine of getting ready for work, going to work, coming back from work and all the while learning to take care of themselves and their own needs. During this stage of the program, they'll acquire the skills, attitudes, work ethic, resilience, perseverance, and integrity required for the world of training and employment.

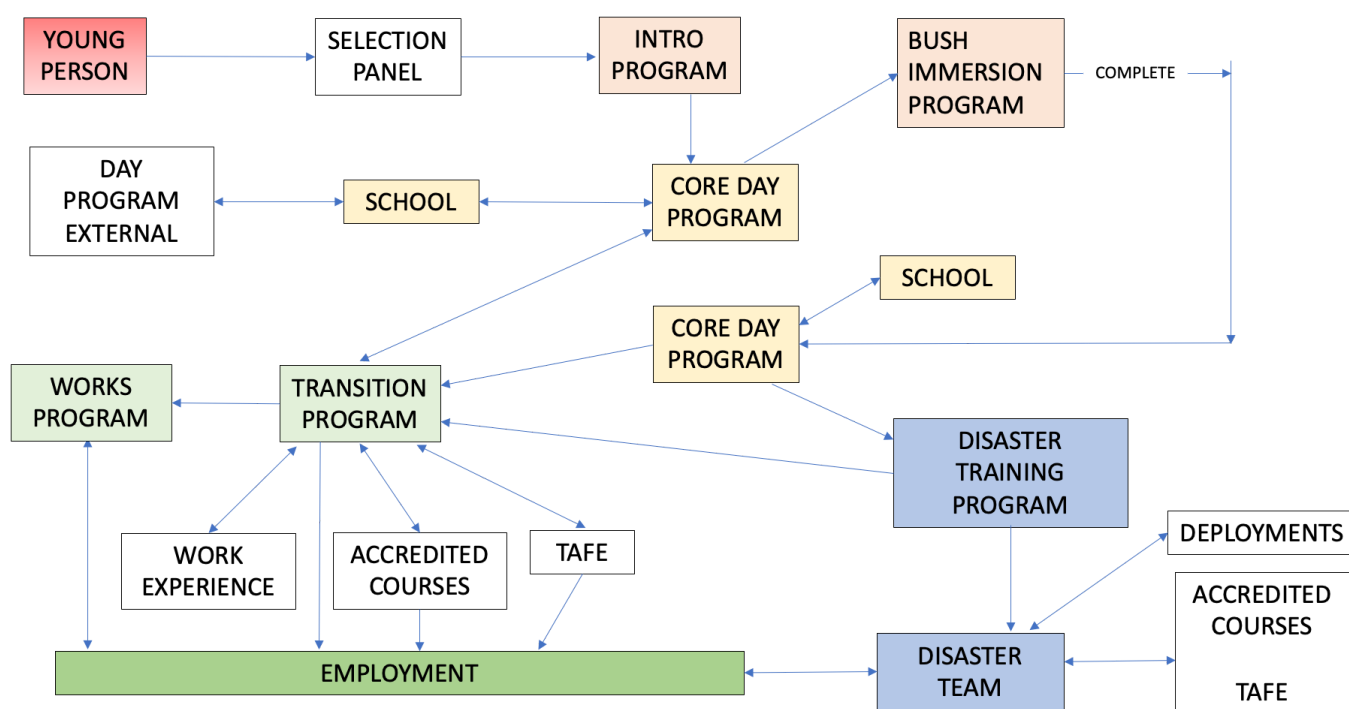
This part of the program will help them identify where their natural skills and talents lie and what careers / passions they might be interested in pursuing. These work experiences have been designed to further develop strong, positive relationships between mentors and mentees, and to allow our participants to start to develop mastery of their chosen pursuits.

From here the young Mountain Trackers will have the opportunity to move into industry based work experience, accredited courses, apprenticeships, traineeships or the tafe system. With all these avenues intended to lead to employment.

Each stage of the Mountain Track program - introduction, wilderness immersion, core day program, transitions and the works programs - has been specifically designed to help build strong relationships between participant and mentor. This includes our Mountain Track mentors and our community based mentors, who will be volunteering their time to share their skills, talents and knowledge with our participants via the activities and experiences which they will help lead.

At this stage we anticipate it will cost on average \$1500 per week to put a young person through the Mountain Track program. Whilst we acknowledge it will be a resource intensive program, for that cost we will be supplying everything they need to form the foundation of a great life. The savings are stark when you compare them to the cost of incarceration - \$750,000 per year.

Diagram 1: Mountain Track Program Flow Chart



Essential Program Elements

- We effectively assess the needs and goals of the young people we work with, and educate them on their rights and responsibilities with us.
- We provide targeted support for everyone involved in our program.
- We are committed to ongoing program evaluation and improvement processes. We run a daily muster check-in circle to start and end each day.
- We are committed to running an accessible and holistic program.

- We empower young people to support one another by creating a culture of peer support.
- We always endeavour to assist participants in meeting their essential needs.
- We support and facilitate connection with the broader community through our programs. By involving community mentors at each stage of the program and having our young Mountain Trackers give back to and support the community where they can.
- Program participation is not time-limited.
- Above all, we will focus on having a rewarding, joyful and engaging time together; young people and the mentors that walk beside them.

Youth and Community Outcomes

Mountain Track will offer a wide range of hands-on-learning programs, skill development opportunities, job-ready learning experiences, work experience and an incredible wilderness immersion / personal development program to kick start it all. Most importantly though we will offer our young people a place of belonging and connection.

Mountain Track is a program designed to harness the power of the community to help transform the lives of our young trackers. By working together with Mountain Track mentors and community volunteers our young people will gain the experience, skills, knowledge, motivation and self-belief needed to go on to great things.

Everything we do at Mountain Track is designed to foster connection between our young trackers and the mentors that walk beside them. It's through these personal connections that our young people start to recognise themselves as the valued community members that they are. They also start to recognise and believe in the talent and potential that lies within. Goals are set and reached, passions are identified and followed and all of a sudden they're the community members we look to for inspiration.

And for Mountain Track the community connection goes both ways. As a way of supporting the community around us we will offer our talents and energy where we are needed in the community. Whether it be disaster clean up, meal prep and delivery to those experiencing financial stress, yard clean ups, animal rescue, activity days at Jumbuk. Whatever it is, we'll be ready to lend a hand.

Partner Organisations

Mountain Track has already started building relationships with various community, state and national level organisations that play a role in educating, supporting and caring for our community. Our primary partners will be Kurnai College, located in Churchill and Morwell, with whom we aim to collaborate through working with kids enrolled in school but disengaged to the extent that they are struggling, regularly truanting or not attending at all. We establish

partnerships with organisations in the Latrobe Valley that have training capabilities to deliver skills and qualifications, short courses and workshop series that will form a core part of our transition to work program.

We are in the process of creating training and employment pathways for our young people in conjunction with the Baw Baw and Latrobe Local Learning and Employment Network. We are also in the process of building relationships with DRA, Federation Uni, Latrobe Youth Space, Churchill Community Hub, Carry on Cafe and local tradespeople who may be able to offer work, training and educational opportunities to our young Mountain Trackers when the time is right.

Our other major partnership is with the Pro-active police unit in Morwell who we will work with to identify the young people most suited to the Mountain Track Program. We will also get these officers on board as mentors to start to break down some of the negative perceptions that exist between our young people and the local police.

Aside from these organisations we see our primary partners as the local community members who will work directly with our young people as mentors. A process previously described.

Mountain Track Venue

Mountain Track will operate out of Jumbuk Park in the Strzelecki Ranges. 320 Acres of native forest and bushland right on the doorstep of the Latrobe Valley. Jumbuk Park offers a unique environment for young people to connect with good people, to form healthy, strong and ongoing relationships with those who walk beside them. Jumbuk's spectacular natural setting allows our young people to challenge themselves, flourish and reach their potential. Nature inspires, nature heals, nature challenges us, and nature provides the best example of the equilibrium and harmony we wish for our young people.

The hard top facilities on offer at Jumbuk Park include seven cabins with a mix of dorm and studio style accommodation. There is a communal kitchen and dining room, a games room building and a separate building with a lounge area.

Some of the many offerings Jumbuk Park provides are outlined in appendix 1.

Mountain Track will lease Jumbuk Park, ie the property, from Jumbuk Mountain Pty Ltd.

Jumbuk Mountain will be responsible for maintaining the Food Compliance Certificate, Registration for Accommodation, swimming pool compliance and the Liquor licence; all four licences which are already in place under the Jumbuk Mountain name, and will be supplied as part of the lease agreement.

Setup Timeline

We are planning to complete our program planning and essential organisational development activities and begin our program operations in May or June 2024. Below are the key activities that need to be completed before we begin.

Fundraising

The operating income needed to fund Mountain Track will be raised through a combination of philanthropic grants and donations from the extended network of Mountain Track. As well as government grants available through youth funding and regional programs.

Fundraising and networking efforts so far have made it clear there is significant interest in this type of program being run in the area. However, like any charity, we understand that our continued viability will be a function of achieving results and maintaining support for the program. To that extent we are in the process of setting up an email system to ensure regular correspondence with the program's stakeholders.

How to support this project?

Make a donation

We are determined to get this program started. Without regular donations we will not be able to establish an ongoing program to work with young people at risk in our community so we are relying on your support.

To donate please contact our fundraising manager Laura Myer on laura.myer@mountaintrack.org or 0439 778 300

Collaborate with us

Above all, we believe the success of our program rests on our ability to work together as a broader community to create collaborative opportunities for young people at risk.

So, if you'd like to be involved please get in touch with us at info@mountaintrack.org, or 0461 397 007, whether you're an individual or from an organisation. To name just a few things we'd love to have help with: with activities or training for our young people and or staff, contacts, mentoring, resource sharing or advice.

Other support we need

There are many non-financial ways that you can get behind this project by helping us with your time, assets and with use of your land. If you have any ideas that add to this list please get in touch.

- Committed volunteers who believe in this project and want to make a long-term contribution and be part of our family-like culture
- Elders! We feel that mature age people can give massive amounts of skill and craft knowledge to our young people, ie. woodwork, carving, leatherwork, mechanics, welding, animal husbandry etc.
- Skilled dog trainers who can commit to one afternoon per week to assist in the training of our dogs to ensure they are in the best position to help our kids on their journey
- Landholders who would be open to us collaborating with them in growing food, harvesting your crop, labour for training, having a camp out etc
- A bicycle mechanic who can teach us how to fix bikes for the rail trail.
- Tradesmen for weekend and weekday workshops, specialising in; mechanics, carpentry, landscaping, welding, metal fabrication and aluminium fabrication
- Drivers to help get our kids to the program and back home again
- Building materials; Trades tools: from spanners to power tools for our workshop Internet, Phone, Computers, IT equipment
- Fuel Cards and vouchers for relevant shops
- Adventure gear; water craft; ropes and climbing gear, bicycles, etc
- Camping gear; swags; tarps; water containers; etc
- Food donations of prepared food for us to use for breakfast, lunch or on overnight camps.
- Work clothes e.g. boots, hats, gloves, belts, socks etc

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Experience Jumbuk Park

Jumbuk offers a unique environment for young people to connect with good people and form healthy, strong relationships with those who walk beside them. Jumbuk's natural setting allows our young people to relax and flourish and take in its many wonders. Nature inspires, nature heals, nature challenges us, and nature provides the best example of the equilibrium and harmony we wish for our young people.

Our priority at Jumbuk is relationship building and our programs; designed to help our young people grow and thrive and develop into independence, only work thanks to the quality support network that exists here to encourage, engage, and assist our young people. We commit to being there for our young people whenever it's called for and in whichever form that may take.



At Jumbuk our ultimate goal is our young people's independence and the key to achieving independent living is strong foundations. The courage to fly comes from self-belief and others believing in you. Also knowing that there are good people that will be there for you when needed. Once healthy solid, supportive relationships are established a sense of belonging begins to take hold. *There's a place I fit in where people care about me, are interested in me, and I can be myself.*

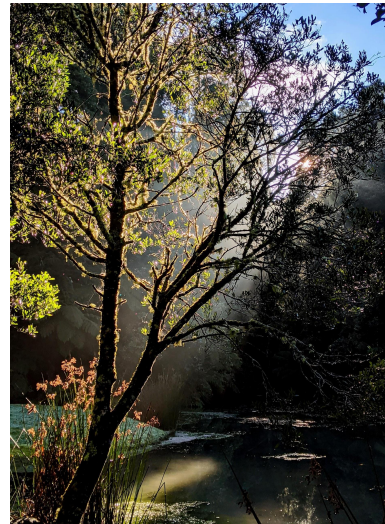
When a secure sense of belonging is established a strong sense of self can develop. A strong sense of self allows young people to see what they're capable of, it allows them to form their own beliefs, desires and dreams and consider what it is they want from their lives. It also helps them to see that they are worthy and see their many capabilities. At Jumbuk we show them the value in making good choices that will serve them well and then we support them in whatever life they choose to pursue.

What we offer at Jumbuk Park

- All our programs, projects, adventures, and activities on offer at Jumbuk involve our young people working in close collaboration with our adult support staff. See above for our relationships first approach at Jumbuk.

Nature Immersion Programs and Activities ¹.

- Bushwalking and forest walks
- Waterfall walks
- Spotighting, looking for plants, animals, insects and birds. During the day and at night time
- Identifying native flora and fauna
- Bush-survival skills
- Building shelters out of native materials.
- Identifying native food sources.



Growing and planting or horticultural therapy ²

- Collecting seeds from native trees
- Propagating native seeds
- Planting native seeds and seedlings,
- Regeneration of deforested areas, planting out with seedlings
- Selling or giving away native seedlings
- Planting and growing native food fruits and vegetables.
- Growing native kitchen gardens + ongoing care for plants
- Growing normal kitchen garden and orchards. + Ongoing care for plants



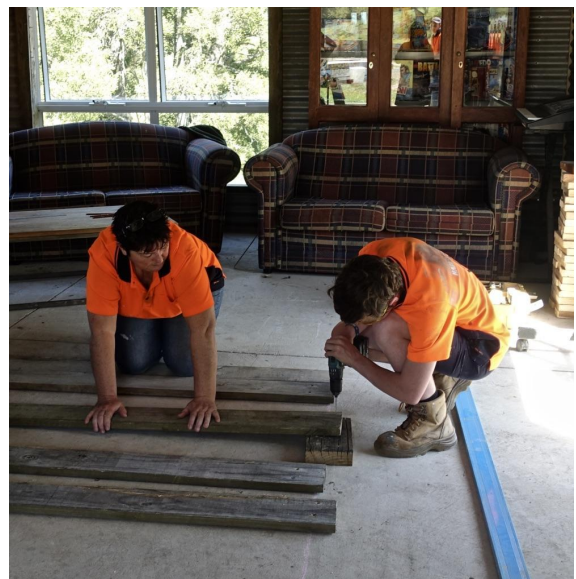


Property Maintenance

- Painting
- Landscaping
- Mowing
- Whipper-snipping
- Raking
- Removing Dangerous tree limbs
- Property improvement
- Property maintenance
- Building upkeep
- Wood chopping
- Wood stacking
- Fallen tree removal

Building, making and creating ⁴

- Building tiny homes,
- Woodwork, Jumbuk has access to a Lucas Mill (giant saw mill), wood turning apparatus, saws, a lot of building related machinery
- Building an escape room.
- Working on tech and electronics
- Building wildlife hides, bird boxes etc
- Building planter boxes



Creative arts⁵

- Art projects, painting, sculpture,
- Using objects from nature to create art.
- Cooking
- Campfire cooking
- Flying a drone with video and photo capabilities
- Photography sessions
- Making and editing videos
- Content creation for social media

Team bonding / team building activities⁶

- Cryptic Treasure hunts
- Spot the object / observation lane.
- Raft building
- Kayak water polo
- Low ropes Initiative course
- High ropes - still to be accredited.
- Volleyball
- Badminton
- Soccer
- Gaga pit
- Cricket
- Football
- Basketball
- Games room with air hockey
- Foosball / table soccer
- Table tennis
- Totem tennis



Individual Challenges^Z

- Kayaking
- Stand-up paddle boarding.
- Swimming in the pool or lake
- Low ropes
- Disc golf
- Archery
- High ropes - still to be accredited
- Hookey
- Quoits
- Kuub
- Finska
- Darts
- Lawn Bowls
- Boche
- Croquet
- Giant Jenga
- Mini Golf
- Trampoline
- Giant chess
- Climbing wall



Other special Jumbuk experiences

- Kite flying and making
- Campfire time
- Campfire cooking
- Star Gazing
- Big screen movie nights
- Karaoke
- Disco dancing
- Giant swings





Also on offer

- An extensive book collection
- Heaps of board games and card games
- A lot of different puzzles
- Computer games
-

Jumbuk Park Community Work

- Natural disaster clean-up and recovery
- Fencing
- Mowing
- Native tree planting
- Firewood cutting and distribution
- Tree and other detritus clean up
- Road maintenance
- Helping with livestock
- Animal rescue



Benefits of our programs

1 Nature Immersion Programs and Activities.

A lot of our programs involve nature immersion. The benefits of being outside in nature – immersed in native bush and in the forest in our case – are numerous. Studies have shown that time in nature – as long as people feel safe – is an antidote of stress. It can lower blood pressure and stress hormone levels, reduce nervous system arousal, enhance immune system function, increase self-esteem, reduce anxiety and improve mood. Attention deficit hyperactive disorder and aggression lessen in natural environments which also help speed the rate of healing. In a recent study, psychiatric unit researchers found that being in nature reduced feelings of isolation, promoted calm and lifted moods. All things we're hoping to achieve with our young people here at Jumbuk.

2 Growing and planting or horticultural therapy

The benefits of horticultural therapy on our young people are extensive. Studies have shown Horticultural Therapy improves mood and improves social skills. It has also been

shown to improve memory and cognitions. It has been shown to promote emotional growth and reduce stress. It can also help people in the healing process engage in healthy conversation about their experiences and learn important life lessons from them.

Horticultural Therapy group programs offer opportunities for participants to develop their physical skills along-side their social skills and self-confidence. Horticultural programs can be targeted to the needs and goals of the participants, and encourage a sense of teamwork, pride, and social connection. Gardening tasks and activities provide shared experiences for participants, as well as facilitating both group and personal achievements and success that can physically be seen, touched, and reflected on by participants and their support networks. Research has found that these successes foster a sense of pride, achievement, togetherness and provide opportunities to develop friendships all supporting self-confidence, enjoyment, and positive experiences amongst participants.

Horticultural Therapy and gardening are also particularly beneficial in providing physical spaces for young people to retreat to when they require space for solitary regulation and calming, with the calming sensory features of these retreats further supporting the self-regulation process.

3 Property Maintenance

By getting our young people involved in property maintenance and upkeep it will help them grow and develop in several ways. They will learn new skills which will set them up for life and independent living.

They will learn about responsibility and self-reliance and through maintenance work they start to see what they are capable of. It teaches them the importance of teamwork as they all do their bit to work together to maintain a beautiful property.

Getting them to contribute to maintenance helps build strong work ethics which will stand them in good stead for life. It helps them build healthy habits and time management skills as they start to realise some tasks have to get done for a place to function well.

Completing maintenance tasks builds bonds as you work together to get the job done and it allows our participants to take a sense of pride and ownership in the place knowing they contribute to its everyday operations and the way it looks and functions. They can also take the credit as the place grows and improves over time as a result of their hard work and input.

4 Building, making and creating.

Building gives young people the opportunity to bond with their tradie / mentor as they share the skills, tricks and techniques needed to construct a dwelling. Mutual respect, trust and admiration builds as they work together towards the collective aim of completing the structure.

Mentored building projects provide our young people and their mentors key opportunities to bond, learn from each other, develop new skills, and get creative.

A healthy work ethic is championed, as they experience the satisfaction and pride of seeing their hard work come to life in the form of liveable dwelling. The side-by-side building process gives young people the chance to open up as their main focus is on the job at hand, so the pressure is off.

Problem solving skills are required as they work through the challenge of completing the many and varied building tasks. And the feelings of satisfaction, pride and accomplishment that come with seeing a building brought to life as a result of your hard work and dedication is hard to beat.

5 Creative arts

Creative projects and opportunities at Jumbuk Park stand to benefit our young people in a number of different ways. Firstly, they bring joy. There is an undeniable sense of joy and pleasure that comes from creating something with one's own hands. Whether or not the work turns out as they hoped, there is still enjoyment in the *process*. Art is a fun outlet that helps positively stimulate and motivate young people.

Research shows that the arts help young people develop their memory and an ability to focus. Skills that will serve them well into adulthood. Creative projects help develop confidence. As they are encouraged in their pursuits they start to realise and recognise the talent they possess. This in turn makes them feel good about themselves.

Creative works offer an outlet for expression, a way for the young person to express the feelings and emotions that exist within but can't always be expressed verbally. And as they are allowed to continue their creative process, they can continually give voice to those inner workings which can be quite liberating.

Innovation & resourcefulness. By allowing our young people to express themselves through their own creative pursuits and giving them the freedom to take risks, they develop a sense of innovation and resourcefulness that they can carry throughout their adult lives. They work hard, finally bringing that piece of art to fruition. They overcame the challenges, the discouragement, and the struggles by sheer *ingenuity*.

Creative pursuits offer a way for our young people to decompress –The act of creating allows them to pull away from the spinning world and rest their minds while their hands are busy. They can be “in the moment” or experience a sense of timelessness as they create and unwind

Finally doing something one enjoys is a liberating feeling. As our young people find pleasure and fulfillment in their art, it will be as if a world of opportunities has opened to them. They will feel free to continue exploring, continue pushing themselves, continue growing in their abilities as they head into adulthood.

6 Team bonding / team building activities

Team building activities are vital at all stages of life, but for young people the benefits can carry them through their teenage years and into adulthood. Team building activities for young people give them the opportunity to learn how to communicate with their peers. By working as a team, young people develop important life skills like problem solving, listening, leadership and creative thinking. Nurturing teamwork skills also develops higher levels of self-confidence, self-esteem, empathy and compassion.

Jumbuk Park offers a number of team building opportunities with great benefits for the young participants. Team building activities encourage teamwork – learning how to work together effectively to achieve a common goal.

Through team challenges you learn how to manage and harness each other's strengths and weaknesses. Team building helps you learn to work and interact with different people and consider different perspectives. You learn the fine art of communication through team building activities. If you want your team to perform you soon start to recognise that good communication is required in both verbal and non-verbal forms. Leadership skills begin to develop as different people stand up and take on the responsibility of guiding the team through the challenges.

In the process of contributing individually to the team activity, young people learn about various ways to face a situation. This broadens their logic and problem-solving skills that are necessary to achieve a goal. It allows them to develop critical thinking.

Through team building activities one learns that to succeed every member of a team has a role to contribute. Being responsible for a role will either ensure it is fulfilled or learnings are taken from it to apply for future. Team building reinforces how taking responsibility and providing responsibility are vital contributors to team performance.

Effective team building leads to team bonding. We want our young people to develop a culture of looking out for each other, supporting, and encouraging each other. We want them to start to believe in each other and trust and respect each other.

Debriefing post group activity enables feedback. Young people learn how to give and receive positive and critical feedback. A very important life skill to master.

Finally team building activities are fun. And fun is an important factor in all the activities we offer at Jumbuk Park. Ultimately, we want our young people to enjoy themselves and be happy here. Fostering team and individual moral through team building activities / challenges is vital for team and individual success.

7 Individual challenges

Challenges during teenage years prepare a person for the adult world. They foster a belief that obstacles are a normal part of life and that one can manage them and come through them, often being better for having had the experience. Hard times stimulate growth in a way that good times don't.

Facing challenges and navigating one's way through them builds resilience capacity. Knowing that one can overcome obstacles, learn from struggles and benefit from mistakes lays a solid foundation for success in later life.

The presence of challenges in one's life often requires working with others or at least drawing support from others to come through them. This is a good thing. As John Donne said, 'we are not islands unto ourselves'. We live in communities and we flourish best, not as isolated individuals, but as people embedded in supportive communities. Facing challenges forces us, in a helpful way, to work with others.

When challenges are faced and conquered, there is a wonderful sense of accomplishment. It is often the substance of great memories and the motivation for rich story telling. In contrast, a smooth experience, devoid of challenges, runs the risk of becoming routine, predictable and entirely forgettable

8 Community work

Jumbuk Park promotes the importance of community work and service and enlists our young people as the driving force. The benefits our young people experience in working with and serving the community are numerous. Firstly, it helps build trust and connection with our local community. As we serve our local community in various capacities the community start to see the value in our programs and support the work we do in providing strong solid foundations for our young people and encouraging our young people as they start to build lives for themselves.

Community service helps young people to acquire knowledge, life skills and provide service to people who need it most (a real honour). Community service and volunteering gives young people the opportunity to become active members of our community, creating a positive societal impact. Community service also increases social awareness and responsibility.

Community service and volunteering allows our young people to develop social skills, explore possible career options and find a very real sense of pride, satisfaction, and achievement. It allows our young people to take a break from what is going on in their own heads and focus on offering their skills and talents in the service of others. There is a boost to one's confidence and self-esteem that comes with this exchange. Helping others makes you feel good.

Volunteering allows our young people to form new relationships and connect with people in our community. They can find a very real sense of purpose in helping others. They begin to see the value in what they have to offer society and can stand tall and proud as a result.

When you're out there helping others, you are the expert or the experienced one in that scenario. You're the one doing the helping rather than being helped. You are the one that has the skills and attributes that are needed. Instead of being at the receiving end of the good will you are the one distributing it. This subtle change in power dynamic results in higher self-esteem and contentment. It helps develop their confidence as they start believing in themselves and seeing what they're capable of and what they have to offer the wider community.