



A couple of years ago, the students at this school had no aspirations. They would have just taken over their family's business, worked alongside them, or even just go on the dole like their parents. After programs like Second STEP and the Future Links Tours, students have been actively talking about their future, what jobs they want and where they want to study in the future.

- Primary School Teacher



Big Dreams, Bigger Futures Program

The Communities for Children Facilitating Partner (CfC FP) Initiative Fairfield is funded by the Australian Government and facilitated by The Smith Family. **This project works with primary schools to support children's motivation and aspirations to become engaged in meaningful activities and career education.**

It also supports children to successfully transition through different life stages and to handle related social and emotional challenges.

SWC has been a Community Partner since 2015, with our Big Dreams, Bigger Futures project

incorporating a wide range of activities including the Mini Seek a Skill Expos where close to 3,000 students from 12 primary schools over a period of 2 years had an opportunity to meet with industry representatives and try their hand at a work related project.

These mini projects allowed participants to start the conversation with their parents about the various career options and pathways they could explore whilst in school. Some of these participants also took part in the Aspirational Behind the Scenes and Future Links Tours which further broadened their horizons and possibilities beyond high school.

A key focus for SWC is "Fairfield children and families feel empowered to engage with life-long aspirations through education, life skills and employment; and are well-prepared to handle life transitions."

SWC is extremely proud of this aspect given that 5 former students that participated in Mini Seek a Skill in 2015 have gone on to accept an apprenticeship in 2019. Their early introduction to careers in trade and speaking with professionals about the skills and attributes required to succeed has helped them achieve this. This reinforces the importance of lifting career and life aspirations at an early age.

One of my students was not actively involved before the program but after the lessons in Second STEP, I could definitely see a change in him. He became a lot more confident to engage in activities.

- Primary School Teacher



When you taught us to "STOP, NAME YOUR FEELING, CALM DOWN", the first time I did that when I was angry, it didn't work. But when I did it by myself, alone in a quiet spot, it worked. Now I use it anytime I need to, so your advice worked.....Thanks for teaching me how to control my body.

- Joy





Second STEP: Resilience and Problem Solving

Students have shown improvement in their conflict resolution skills and require less teacher intervention in social disagreements in the classroom and playground. In particular, the boys have been involved in less physical altercations. Teachers have also reported that students are displaying more empathy in the classroom and that their cooperative learning and teamwork skills have improved. Students in the Opportunity Class were more emotionally prepared for the Selective High School test than they have been in the past, thanks to the focus on self-calming strategies during Second STEP.

- Primary School Assistant Principal

The Second STEP program is an Evidence Based Program (EBP), designed to teach children social and emotional learning skills, including how to understand and manage their emotions, control their reactions, be aware of others' feelings and have the skills to problem-solve and make responsible decisions.

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is how children and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and control emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions.

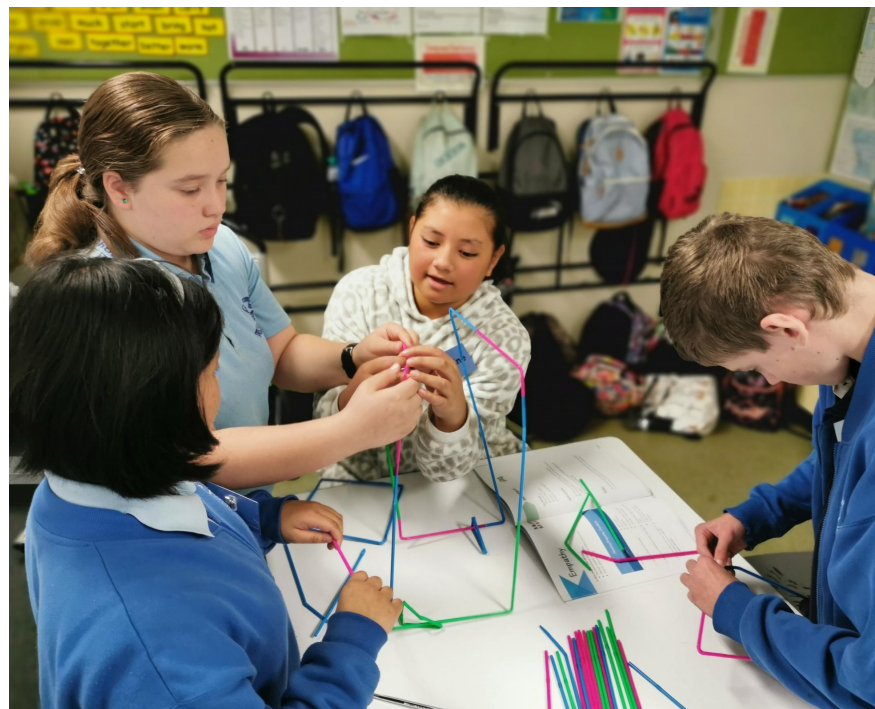
Research shows that students with strong SEL skills have more coping strategies to manage stressful situations, including peer pressure, bullying and exams such as NAPLAN, HSC and other major exams.

Longer term research also shows that teaching students SEL skills like perseverance, collaboration and self-control can improve their health, academic achievement, career success and happiness in life.

SWC has delivered more than 815 SEL EBP program sessions including Second STEP and FRIENDS for Life since 2015.

The EAL/D students, many refugees, became more confident to cope with conflict situations both in the classroom & playground.

- Primary School Teacher



Second STEP is the most helpful thing to control my own future, it's THE BEST.

-Rita



Students are now able to verbalise their thoughts and feelings and due to this they are able to manage their emotions before it becomes a physical reaction.

- Primary School Teacher

