

employment options

EMPOWERING PEOPLE

ANNUAL REPORT 2017



@EmploymentOptionsAust



@EmployOptions



Employment Options Inc. SA

Our Mission

To contribute to equity and social justice in society by directly assisting disadvantaged people to plan and achieve their work or learning goals.

Our Vision

A community where everyone has the opportunity to achieve their aspirations.

Our Values

Innovation
Connectedness
Integrity
Collaboration
Respect
Entrepreneurial thinking

From The Chair

I am pleased to present the 2017 Annual Report for Employment Options in my 17th year as Chairman and as I look back on our journey, I feel positive and confident about our future as we work towards achieving our Strategic Plan 2016 – 2018.

The past year has been another of consolidation, renewal and calculated decision making by the Board. We continue to apply our efforts and time to plan and enable Employment Options' to flourish. I commend the Board for their constant monitoring and adjustments to make this happen within our ever-changing environment.

A key challenge for Employment Options is to achieve financial viability with diverse income sources and to continue to assist disadvantaged people in our communities. The success of our current programs and the commencement of a new program called Pathfinder, funded by the Department of Employment under Empowering Youth Initiative, is paving the way. However, we must continue our efforts to grow and cannot become complacent.

Decisions concerning new income sources, expansion of programs and streamlining head office activities to improve service delivery need to be made. This is especially important given the nature of our industry and short-term funding cycles. I see the Board's role as setting the direction and supporting the organisation in this growth as essential.

2017 saw a major change to the personnel structure at Employment Options with the retirement of CEO, Lesley Kennedy. For over 27 years Lesley has been as an outstanding leader, assisting the success of Employment Options. Lesley has worked in harmony with the Board and provided the highest level of support and reporting detail to ensure informed decisions are made with confidence. Her dedication and willingness to supply information has been outstanding. As Chair of the Board, I thank Lesley for her wonderful personal support and, on behalf of Employment Options and the Board; I wish Lesley every happiness in retirement.

The Board appointed Michelle Braham as CEO in September, bringing exciting ideas and vision for a successful future. Michelle has outlined her vision for our future and the Board members and I look forward with great anticipation to working with her to ensure our business continues to grow.

In closing, I would like to thank all the Board members for their unfailing support and commitment which has enabled Lesley and now Michelle to continue to provide the best service they can with confidence in the governance of the organisation.

“I feel positive and confident about our future as we work towards achieving our Strategic Plan 2016 – 2018”

“I see the Board's role as setting the direction and supporting the organisation in this growth as essential”

ANDREW WOOD

From The CEO

As I write my first Annual Report for Employment Options I feel very proud to be part of this organisation and see firsthand the important work we do that enhances opportunities within our local communities. In September 2017 Lesley Kennedy retired after successfully leading Employment Options for more than 27 years. I am honoured to follow in Lesley's footsteps and thank the Board for their endorsement. My journey at Employment Options began about 10 years ago when I first joined our Human Resources section. Lesley has had enormous influence over my development as a leader and I am grateful for her mentorship and guidance.

I am excited to continue with our work and believe that this year we've come a long way towards meeting the Board's strategic plan 2016 - 2018.

High Level of Participation

A significant achievement this year was improving participant engagement through innovative service design. At our Youth Spaces and Successful Transitions programs we achieved attendance rates of 70-80% which highlights the success of these programs who assist our most severely disengaged. I believe this result is evidence that our experiential learning methodology is working.

Addressing a Growing Problem

A major challenge for many of our service users relates to career and jobs; whether it is from school to work, between jobs or career changes. It can be difficult to know where to start without specialist career assistance and advice. In all of our programs we have now embedded a career development framework, adapted to each individual's needs (school leaver, career change/redundancy, etc). Through the development of our specialist career services we have helped an increasing number of participants who are struggling to find their place in the world of work. This is a new service we have commenced and look forward to seeing it expand over the coming years.

"I feel very proud to be part of this organisation and see firsthand the important work we do that enhances opportunities within our local communities"

As part of this expansion, I am delighted to announce Pathfinder - an innovative new program funded under Empowering Youth Initiatives, Department of Employment. This program combines online and real world experiences to explore career options and pathways and uses gamification as the engagement technique. Thank you to Melanie Worrall and the team at Klevar for sharing their gamification expertise and developing the Pathfinder online space. Pathfinder will run over 2 years with our first participants due to commence in October 2017. Watch this space!

Team Effort

The coming year is set to, yet again, be challenging, exciting and rewarding, and I have every confidence that with its sound foundations and the continued dedication of its staff, management and Board, Employment Options will again make a significant contribution within the communities we serve.

MICHELLE BRAHAM

Our Vision

A community where everyone has the opportunity to achieve their aspirations

How we do it



Where we reach



Who we assist



Youth Spaces

Employment Options Youth Space East (St Peters) and Youth Space West (Port Adelaide) provide services to young people who have disengaged from school. Using Experiential Learning methodologies, our professional staff provide a safe environment for young people to engage with learning through participation in hands-on practical projects. The Youth Spaces have resources to support a wide variety of possible project ideas including, IT/electronics, 3-D printing, robotics, drones, graphic design, Programming, music, woodworking, art, and mechanical activities such as motorbike restoration and bicycle repairs. Most students who are referred to the Youth Spaces have been disengaged from education for an average of 29 weeks. We are experiencing positive student attendance due to the hands on practical learning approach.



Students are generally referred to our Youth Space facilities from schools through the Department of Education and Child Development's (DECD) FLO Program, although referrals are accepted from other sources.

Students are supported with access to case management, career exploration and planning to establish future employment goals, literacy and numeracy through the use of basic skills (BKSB) software. Case management assists to establish learning goals which includes research and investigation into suitable VET courses and other learning options that directly relate to their employment goals.

Services

This year students have engaged in a range of projects that they have researched and developed including planning and purchasing of materials. Some of the projects have included:

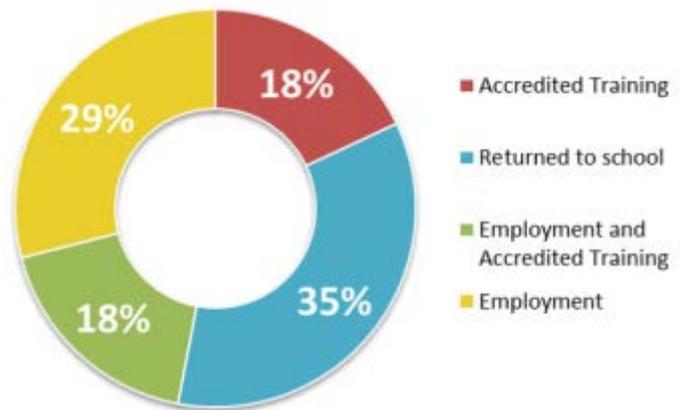
- Restoration of both electric and acoustic guitars
- Building a desk with LED strip lights
- Building a table
- Creating beetles from street lights
- Working in a group project to design and build a picnic table
- Making wooden boxes
- Using 3D printer to make key rings
- Making wooden chopping boards and stools
- Development and creation of a comic book
- Science related activities using salt and electrons to power different objects
- Sharing our different cultures through food



81% of students after their engagement with our Youth Space facilities have gone onto various pathways including accredited learning, return to school, apprenticeships and employment. We strongly believe that providing an experiential learning environment for disengaged students offers a positive pathway for their future goals.



Students who exited to a pathway



Our students' pathways



Attendance Results

100% : Completely disengaged from school before Youth Space

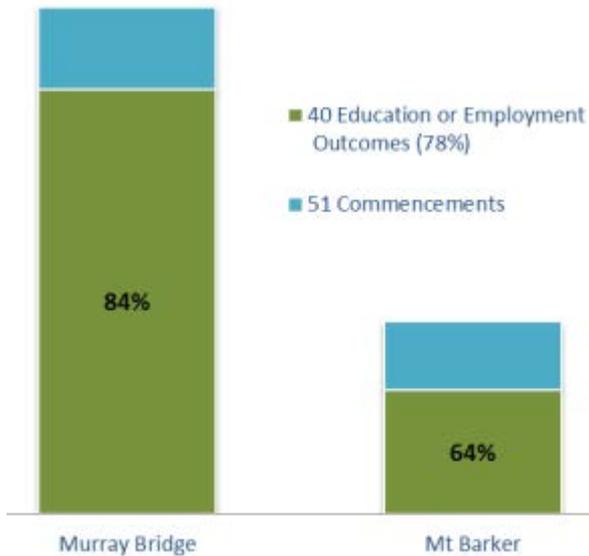
29 weeks : Average time away from school

70%: Average attendance rate 2017

Days attended/Planned attendance days for all students in 2017

Successful Transitions

Participant Outcomes



The Successful Transitions (ST) program delivered in Mt Barker and Murray Bridge has been providing mentoring, one on one support and case management to young people aged 17-24 who are disengaged from education, training or employment and is funded by the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion.

The program has assisted participants to explore suitable occupations, plan a career pathway and to identify work experience and training opportunities that match their career goals and job preferences. They also learn the life skills needed to successfully apply for a job and keep it.

This year we achieved well over our contracted participation numbers, and many of those young people found employment or commenced a training or education outcome.

Participant Story



Jayden is an 18-year-old, living with his grandparents and diagnosed with Autism and Tourette's syndrome. He was referred to us by Disability SA for career assistance and help to get his provisional drivers licence. Jayden is a gifted young man who needed individualised assistance and mentoring to help him move forward with his life.

Greg, our Successful Transitions In-Motion Coordinator, worked alongside Jayden and developed a plan to ensure he achieved his goals. This plan was multi-faceted and involved collaboration with many different partners.

With weekly support from Greg, Jayden developed the self-confidence to take steps that he initially didn't feel confident in doing such as attending a work experience interview and placement at the Murray Bridge Council. His application was successful, and the placement has helped him develop his employability skills and meet new people.

Jayden is enjoying the work experience so much that he is now a regular volunteer for the Council.

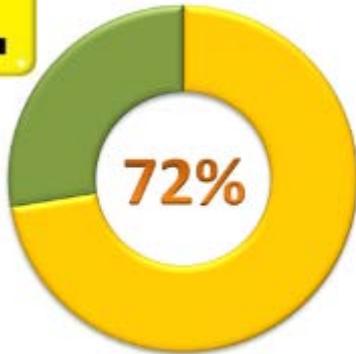
Jayden's other goal was to gain his provisional driver's license. Through our partnership with the Murray Bridge Council we were able to arrange lessons with an amazing driving instructor, Matt from Smartway Driving School. Matt helped Jayden gain his provisional drivers licence which gives him independence and will be a big help in securing employment.

Throughout Jayden's journey Greg has also helped him explore different career options and provided mentoring and weekly support to address his anxiety issues. Jayden now has a coping strategy he can use when he feels he needs it.

We are all very proud of Jayden's achievement and wish him the best in the future.

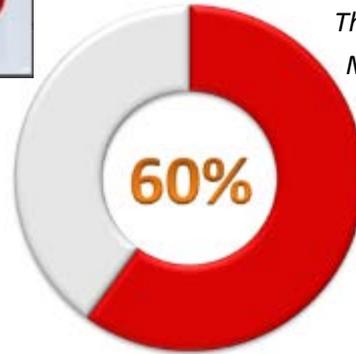
In Motion Program

Having a drivers licence increases the ability for young people to participate in a wider variety of employment and training opportunities and become financially independent. The In Motion and Rural City of Murray Bridge Driving programs includes an experiential education program to support participants to understand the road rules and legal requirements to gain a learners permit and a provisional driver's licence. Participants are mentored and supported depending on their individual needs and life challenges.



29 clients commenced

21 passed their L's tests



Thanks to:
*The Rural City of
Murray Bridge*

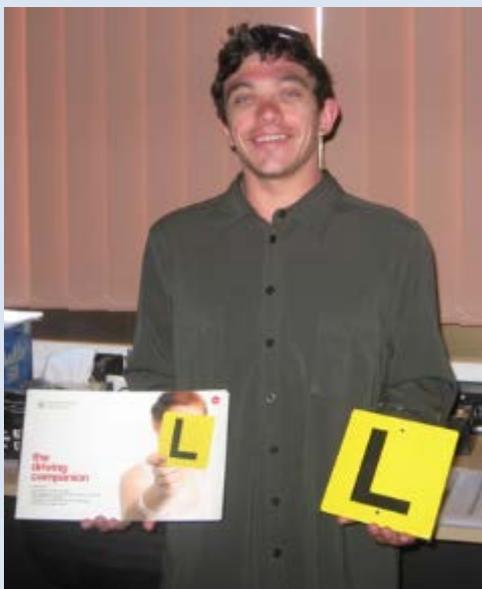
10 clients commenced the driving program

6 have their P's, the other 4 are continuing

Participant Story

24 year old, Clinton, came to the program with low self-esteem, anxiety issues and low numeracy and literacy skills. He was referred to the Successful Transitions program to get career guidance, gain his Learners permit and work towards gaining his driver's licence.

Clinton left school in Grade 7 due to family issues and has struggled to read and write well. Through weekly attendance and engagement in the learners training, delivered by Fiona Harley, Clinton was able to gain his Learners permit and then take part in the drivers program funded by the Murray Bridge Council.



Clinton completed a work experience placement with the Councils parks and gardens team, an experience he enjoyed greatly.

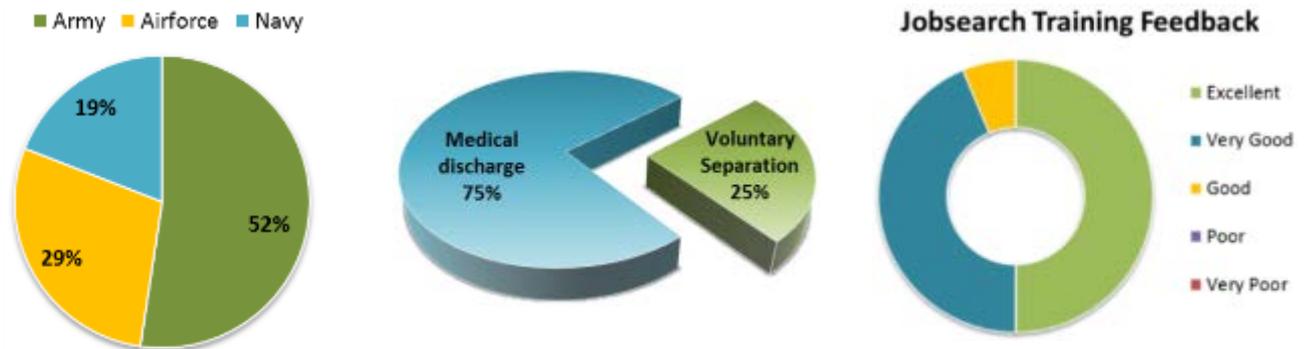
One-on-one mentoring with Greg, In-Motion Coordinator, over the past year has given Clinton the confidence, skills and knowledge needed to write his own cover letters and update his resume to be used in job applications.

Clinton is preparing to undertake his Provisional drivers licence test with Smartway Driving School and is looking forward to his new found freedom that the Successful Transitions program has been able to give him.

Australian Defence Force – Career Transition Management Services

Employment Options is proud to be an approved panel member of the Australian Defence Force Career Transition Management Coaching. This is a national service providing intensive career support for Defence personnel as they transition from the Army, Navy or Air Force. Many have been injured during active service and now face medical discharge and many are unable to continue to work in their area of expertise. With our support they are guided through the transition to a new career.

We also provided a series of 2 day Job Search workshops for Defence personnel. Many of our participants joined the Defence force straight from school and didn't have a resume or ever attended a job interview. Our workshop enabled them to develop these critical career development skills and put them into practice as they transitioned to civilian life.



Client Testimonial

“Employment Options were supportive of my whole transition process. We identified a career goal which was to become an Enrolled Nurse. We worked in collaboration to find out the best way to find jobs to apply for, how to adapt a resume and cover letter for particular job applications and develop a great resume.

I am confident now with the skills I have gained through Employment Options to apply for EN roles when I finish my course and also more confident with going in to a job interview.”

Emma – ADF Participant



Pathfinder Program Empowering Youth Initiative

Employment Options was successful in securing a grant from the Department of Employment through their Empowering YOUTH Initiatives to develop and deliver Pathfinder.

PATHFINDER is an interactive career exploration program where young people take part in virtual and real-world activities to uncover an attainable, realistic and personally appealing career goal and develop employability skills to build their confidence and ability to enter the workforce. It combines the principles of the first element of the Choose-Get-Keep model with gamification principles.

Pathfinder is facilitated by a qualified Career Practitioner and Mentor, with support provided throughout the program in collaboration with the Young Person's Job Active Provider, case manager and/or School.

We would like to thank the Department of Employment for their support of the Pathfinder project and look forward to providing valuable data and insight from this program that can inform new ways of engaging and supporting authentic outcomes for Young People in the future for sustainable and fulfilling employment.

Fast Facts

- Young people aged 15-24 years
- 364 places available

Eligibility criteria includes those who have left school prior to completing Year 12, do not have a clear employment goal or planned employment pathway and are not engaged in education or employment.



Watch our promotional video at www.employmentoptions.com.au

Our Supporters

As a charitable organisation we rely on funding and other forms of income support to deliver our services to as many people requiring assistance as possible. We are grateful for the support and close collaboration with the following organisations.

Federal Government



Local Government



South Australian Government



Our Memberships



2016-17

Andrew Wood - Chairperson

Andrew has been a Board member since 1999. He has had broad management experience, especially in large not-for-profit organisations, and has owned and operated his own businesses. His qualifications include Cert IV Training and Assessment, and Grad Cert in Organisational Management. Andrew is an HACCP (Food Standards and Safety) auditor and trainer, he is also a Justice of the Peace.

Michael Coulsen - Deputy Chairperson

Michael has been a Board member since 2007. He is the owner/director of an RTO, which has been running for 16 years. He has extensive knowledge and experience in RTO Operations and Management, qualifications in Horticulture (BSc) and Adult Education (B Ed), and has trained students in horticulture for over 20 years. He is also a volunteer for the Cancer Council.

Trish Crosby - Treasurer

Trish has been a Board member since 1999. She is a partner in TJ Consulting Services, providing Management Systems consulting, specialising in Quality, Integrated Management and Food Safety Systems to accreditation standards, and support with ISO compliance.

Vivienne Barker - Member

Vivienne has been a Board member since 2010. She has held the role of Executive Officer of Southern Volunteering (SA) Inc for 11 years and has 11 years previous experience in Employment Services in both WA and SA. Her qualifications include Adv Dip Community Services and she is the honorary Secretary of the Strathalbyn Neighbourhood Centre.

Michelle Braham – Employment Options CEO

Michelle joined Employment Options in 2007 and has had several different roles during this time. She is the current CEO, and has a broad range of skills and experience in management, governance, human resources and in the establishment of services for young people and those seeking career assistance. Her qualifications include Graduate Certificate in Career Development, Diploma of Human Resources, Diploma of Management, Certificate in Public Sector Management, Certificate IV in Career Development and Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. Prior to joining Employment Options, Michelle was employed by the Northern Territory Government.

Jacqui Coates - Member

Jacqui joined our Board in 2016 and is a young social entrepreneur. Jacqui provides coaching and mentoring in financial assistance to areas of management practices to householders. Jacqui's qualifications include a Diploma in Quality Auditing, Certificate IV Business Practice and Certificate IV Paralegal Studies. After a tragic road accident within the local community, Jacqui and her family developed the 'T for Tourist' plates program to place identifying plates on tourists' cars to show they are unfamiliar with local roads.

Our Team

As Employment Options continues to grow, the following staff members have contributed over the past financial year in providing opportunities for our participants to work towards and achieve their goals:

- Lesley Kennedy – CEO
- Steve Colquhoun – Finance Contractor
- Michelle Braham – General Manager – Operations and Career Services
- John Coates – Youth Contracts Manager
- Ron Parker – Youth Space West Manager
- Rachel Williams – Youth Space East Coordinator
- Vanessa Spargo – Office Manager
- Carly Morris – Youth Space Case Manager
- Michelle Harvey – Career Development Contractor
- Shannon Cox – Youth Space Case Manager
- Greg Nichol – In Motion Program Coordinator
- Rob Sanders - Youth Space Case Manager
- Sandra Burner – Career Development Contractor
- Susan Teagle - Youth Space East Coordinator
- Melanie Munday - Youth Space Case Manager
- Fiona Harley – Administration Officer

There is no "I" in Team, but we sure are glad there is "u" in our volunteers!

Our Volunteers

Our volunteers have contributed towards our programs' ongoing successes by providing valued support to our participants by donating their time, expertise and knowledge:

- Tony Onofrio
- Kim Goreham
- Anthony Pawlowski
- David Nearmy
- Paul Millar
- Sharee Downs
- Daniel Orr
- Lynn Hennessy
- Steven Glass
- Amanda Skull
- Caio Amarante
- Smiler Te Ao
- Philip Hind
- William Janssen
- Maud Palmieri
- Shashi Pemasinghe

Student Placements

- Longquan Su
- Camila Hino
- Emryk Prout
- Pardeep Singh
- Caitlin Bratkovic
- Emeka Okwu

Our Locations

Head Office

Unit 5/122 Princes Highway
Nairne SA 5252
(PO Box 230)
Ph: 08 8388 6600

Pathfinder HQ

197B Payneham Road
St Peters SA 5069
Mob: 0448 852 734

Youth Space East

197A Payneham Road
St Peters SA 5069
Mob: 0437 182 523

Youth Space West

20 Divett Street
Port Adelaide SA 5015
Mob: 0437 182 523

Successful Transitions

Murray Bridge TAFE
Swanport Road
Murray Bridge SA 5253

Mt Barker TAFE
Dumas Street
Mt Barker SA 5251
Ph: 08 8388 6600
Mob: 0427 667 175

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