

Darwin

From: Mimi Woolley
Sent: Thursday, 21 February 2013 1:40 PM

Mimi Woolley
Coordinator
Exodus Foundation Tutorial Centres NT
1,438 children's lives transformed in the Exodus Tutorial Program since 1996

- Costs \$20m, Benefits to Society >\$550m

Mimi

Re: Changing my daughter's life and future

The two words I can use to describe your Exodus Foundation tutorial program is "Hope" and "Happiness".

My daughter came home in year 2 and said "Mummy why am I the dumbest in the class" - this broke my heart and you could see Georgia was hurting.

My daughter Georgia has struggled with reading and writing since transition - we knew she had difficulties and have struggled to give her the support she has needed.

Georgia is a different girl since starting in your intensive tutorial program 7 weeks ago - she comes home and the first thing she wants to do is her homework - in the past this was always just too much for her.

You have given her the steps to reading - the positive reinforcement that she can do it and she has - she reads - she picks up the newspaper and has a go - it is no longer a shame job that she cannot read - it is something she knows she can do and will do and that her future is a much brighter place because of your dedicated team.

Without your program Georgia would still be asking why she is the dumbest in the class - she doesn't because she isn't - and I don't think she would care anymore because she can see that she is learning and that she has the power to continue learning.

So thank you and I will do everything in my power to ensure this program continues because every child with significant reading difficulties deserves this opportunity

My daughter is totally different - she is happy, confident and you can see her growing in confidence every day - there is no price for that - it is invaluable - you have changed her life and her future.

Thank you - I am happy for you to reproduce this letter and use it in your EFFORT to continue funding for this brilliant program.



THE YOUTH OF TODAY

Story of remarkable achievement

Kalisha Morgan with her brother and mother. Photo: Amanda Williams

SOPHIE WOTTON

REDFERN: Ten year-old Kalisha Morgan reads more like a 13 year-old. But that wasn't always the case. Just six months ago she was branded a low-progress reader, struggling to sound out difficult words and embarrassed to read in front of her peers. After completing an intensive literacy program with the Exodus

Foundation, Kalisha now reads difficult words with aplomb and has high hopes for her future.

"I want to be a journalist on a TV show like *Today Tonight*", she said during her recent graduation ceremony. "I want to tell stories about people who struggle."

A Year Five student at Matraville Soldiers Settlement Memorial School, Kalisha is one of more

than 1,400 students to have completed the Exodus literacy program since 1996. Students improve their reading age by an average of 14-16 months during the 18-week program and continue to improve after graduation.

"For kids whose parents cannot afford private tuition there is simply nothing else like this out there", said Glenys O'Riley, National Education Manager for Exodus. "If they hadn't

had this opportunity the gap would still be widening and high school would be almost impossible."

Exodus uses the MULTILIT (Making Up Lost Time In Literacy) program developed at Macquarie University by Professor Kevin Wheldall, and maintains a teacher student ratio of 1:6. Students are taught skills such as phonics, vocabulary and comprehension explicitly and are tested daily.

It's a winning formula, according to Maricel Salazar, Co-ordinator of the Redfern Tutorial Centre.

"We support the students by praising them for trying hard, not just for academic achievement," she said. "By coming to Exodus and reading with kids from other schools they realise they're not alone and the anxiety is removed from learning."

According to Ms Salazar, students can struggle to read for all sorts of reasons.

"Some kids are at a disadvantage from the beginning," she said. "They might have been through trauma, they might have attention problems, they might not have been mature enough to start school. Once there is a gap, it just widens and they feel like giving up."

Ms Salazar said Kalisha's achievement was remarkable. "She came to us in the bottom 10 per cent of all 10 year-olds out there and through persistence she is now in the top 10 per cent of her cohort. "She is bright, motivated, hard-working - what's to stop her?"

Kalisha's mother, Lacey Berwick, agrees. "She's a happier person and so much more confident," she said. "Sometimes when I nag her, she'll just look up at me and say 'Mum, be civil!' It's like I'm dealing with a little woman."

YOUTH OF TODAY, A REGULAR ARTICLE ON LOCAL YOUTH AND RELATED ISSUES, IS KINDLY SPONSORED BY APPETITE CAFE

APPETITE CAFE
82 REGENT ST, REDFERN
TEL 9699 4069



As many of you will be aware, the University is planning a number of changes on the Darlington side of the campus. We are continuing discussions about the concept and design for the new Business School.

The other exciting development concerns the changes to the Noel Martin Sports and Aquatic Centre. As well as being used by many of our sporting groups, this is a centre for the whole community and the additions will allow more people to enjoy the facility.

The changes are planned to take place in two stages and we have just received development consent from the City of Sydney for the building. Stage one will involve the demolition of an existing building currently used for storage and the construction of a new sports hall which will be used for a variety of indoor sports, mainly basketball.

There'll also be include areas for various University clubs including boxing and other combat sports, as well as space designed for group fitness activities.

Stage two, which will happen in about 18 months time, will involve construction of a new pool for water polo as well as landscaping of the area.

We're building a better centre for the whole community. Why not become a member www.susf.com.au/page/sports_and_aquatic_centre

Building is expected to commence within the next month. Further details are on our web site: www.sydneysydney.edu.au/facilities/projects/sac/expansion

Michael Spence
Vice-Chancellor

COMMUNITY CONTACT DETAILS

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Heritage Volunteers

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Australian Technology Park (ATP) Eveleigh, once the site of Australia's largest workforce employing state-of-the-art technology in the manufacture of steam locomotives, is now managed by Australian Technology Park Sydney Ltd (ATPSL).

Applications are invited from people with a passionate interest in Australia's rich heritage to join a committed team of part-time volunteers at ATP.

ATPSL is inviting interested volunteers to submit expressions of interest for the following activities:

Customer Service Volunteers

- To assist visitors to the ATP with way-finding and interpretation of ATP's rich heritage and lead small group tours from time to time as required.
- Cataloguing of heritage assets

Conservation Volunteers

- To work on heritage equipment, machinery and other assets. This will involve working with light hand tools, paint brushes etc.
- Cataloguing of heritage assets

For an information pack with further details, please contact:

Gary Love Project Manager Sustainability & Volunteering
Australian Technology Park Sydney Ltd

Email g.love@atp.com.au

Phone 9209 4426

From: Mimi Woolley
Sent: Thursday, 21 February 2013 2:19 PM
To:
Subject: FW: Parents Quotes

Mimi Woolley
Coordinator
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From: Taryn Hendricks
Sent: Wednesday, 20 June 2012 2:41 PM
To: Mimi Woolley
Subject: Parents Quotes

"My boy can read now, his learning has improved in a normal classroom setting." Name Withheld

"Such a significant improvement in their confidence and ability in the classroom." Name Withheld
Year 3 / 4 Teacher

Life changing for my daughter. She has gained so much confidence. Just to see her stand up in front of people and read she would never have done that before. She reads all the time, in the car, when she get up (in the morning), when she gets home from school. It blows me away." Name Withheld

Two of my daughters have been in the Exodus program. Their reading level has gone through the roof. It has had a flow-on affect to their little brother. They read to him and he always saw them reading and he wanted to read books too. It has also helped with their comprehension. I highly recommend Exodus to anybody who needs help in their reading. " Name Withheld

Taryn Hendricks

Exodus Foundation Tutorial Centre NT

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To: Mimi Woolley
Exodus Foundation Literacy Coordinator NT
c/o Holy Spirit Primary School
Gsell St
Wanguri NT 0812

Mr & Mrs K

✝

Re: Exodus Literacy Program

Dear Mimi,

We would like to thank you and those involved with making it possible for the Exodus Foundation Multilit Program to be run at Holy Spirit Primary School. It is through this program that our son, Name Withheld (NW), was able to 'catch up' with the rest of his class.

At an academic level, this is a great and commendable achievement; a credit to the teachers and organisers of the program. There is ample evidence from him, and the other students, that the program is extremely effective – extraordinary considering that many of the students struggle with a wide variety of learning difficulties.

What we didn't see captured through the student assessment charts is the impact it has on the child's idea of self worth. The profound change from an aversion to learning to the conviction that "every day is a learning day" has helped NW's confidence and self-image.

It is this second, non-tangible, aspect that we are especially grateful for. We have seen that the Multilit Program is more than just an academic program – as evidenced by our son, who has come away from an 18-week program with confidence and zeal to learn. This was from a boy who avoided reading and spelling and would actively avoid many learning activities at home and at school. He had a low self-esteem and would often come home sad and frustrated.

Over the period of the program we have seen NW grow into a keen student and looked forward to being integrated back into his class and learning with the rest of his peers.

We again would like to express our gratitude to the Exodus Foundation, Holy Spirit Primary School and all those that have made the Multilit Program possible. We whole-heartedly recommend its continuation in helping other kids in need – not only for the academic impact but for the incredibly positive aspect it has on them as a person.

Keep up the fantastic work!

Sincerely,

Name Withheld

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From: Taryn Hendricks
Sent: Wednesday, 20 June 2012 3:03 PM
To: Mimi Woolley
Subject:

"When we went shopping, my daughter only bought toys, now she just wants to buy books- so thats a good sign. We bought the Diary of a Wimpy Kid DVD and book, and now my daughter will watch the dvd and check in the book to see if the dvd's are true to the novel. " Name Withheld

Nurturing and supporting each individual child is a stated aim of the Catholic school system. At Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School, the Exodus Foundation provides children who require additional support with an intensive semester of literacy training. The results are outstanding: at the end of the program, children read and write with confidence, and are academically ready to join their peers.

The outstanding results for the Exodus program speak volumes. The level of intensive tuition that the Exodus Program provides is well beyond the capacity for any school to provide through recurrent or additional funds. The target group for our school was initially our Indigenous students. The feedback from families was overwhelming. Conversations about football and the weather soon changed to discussions around reading and the impact that the program was making on their children's reading behaviours at home. Students who did not normally read began to take up reading with a passion. Teachers in the literacy program are specially trained, and provide a focussed and targeted approach to addressing specifically identified weaknesses in reading acquisition.

Our strong results for Indigenous students in NAPLAN are a testament to the contribution that this program makes to our School Community. Results translated directly to NAPLAN results whereby our Indigenous students performed strongly with all but one student achieving Benchmark across all tests.
Bernadette Morriss Principal Holy Spirit School

Taryn Hendricks

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1.7.11

Dear Duncan and Mary,

This is just a short note to express our school's thanks for the opportunity you gave Name's Withheld (NW) and NW this last semester. Besides their learning issues in literacy, each of these students had other "issues" associated with their learning over many years. To see the growth in self-esteem of these students over the semester, let alone their reading growth, is to see the worthiness of your program from a social and emotional perspective alone.

Whilst NW left to go to Port Macquarie, she had gained a great foundation through your program and the consistency in her life she experienced for the duration of the program benefited her greatly. NW may not have continued, but we all recognise he too made great strides in the time he was in the program.

Our visit to the classes let us see how hard the students and staff worked. The efficacy of your program was evident through the most efficient way it was demonstrably organised.

Please pass on our thanks to every member of staff associated with our students, from the bus driver to the teachers and volunteers. We heard many stories about them all over the semester!

Our students expressed their thanks publicly at your Graduation Ceremony yesterday. I nearly joined the father who spoke in an impromptu fashion in his haka, as I too was moved to say publicly a very big "Thank You"! Please pass on our thanks to Reverend Bill Crews also.

We look forward to the next semester and the wonderful results we are sure you will achieve with Name's Withheld.

Yours faithfully,

Name Withheld Name Withheld
Principal Class teacher

Name Withheld
Class Teacher

Name Withheld (NW) - **former Exodus student**

NW was a student at Dulwich Hill Public School when he came to Exodus in 1999.

He wanted very much to come to the Graduation but cannot be with us this morning because he has major university exams tomorrow. He has asked me to pass on his congratulations to all the students, and he has sent us the following information about his achievements since leaving Exodus:

- After completing the Exodus literacy course, NW finished high school and went on to tertiary study
- He completed his undergraduate degree in Advanced Science at the University of Sydney
- NW then took an Honours Degree in Physiology at the University of Sydney
- He then completed a Masters Degree in Medicine at the University of Sydney
- He is currently in his final year of a Masters degree in Pharmacy at the University of Newcastle.
- While he was studying at the University of Sydney, NW regularly volunteered to read with students at Exodus. He even brought university friends along as volunteers, which was awesome.

On average, Exodus students are 3.5 years behind their peers in reading age when they start here. Would NW's achievements have been possible if he had missed out on the opportunity to improve his reading at Exodus? No!

Australia is a wealthy country and all of our futures depend on having a well-educated population who can participate fully in our society.

Having six million Australians who are not fully literate is not only tragic – it is unwise.

How many NW's are we allowing to fall through the cracks? 19 % of current Year 9 students are below the minimum National Literacy Standard. Can we afford not to have all Australians literate? Is the human pain & cost of being illiterate acceptable ?

We are very proud that NW will be able to contribute positively to his community, but we're also sad that many other young Australians will not have the same opportunities as

As in medicine, educational intervention needs to be evidence-based. For seventeen years Exodus has supported students who have fallen into the "too hard basket" and we have the evidence to show what works - even for those whom the system has given up on!

We only wish we could offer our literacy program to all of the 10% of students who leave school not fully literate.

Dear Mary,

Firstly i can't begin to thank you and all the staff from exodus enough. I must admit during the term i wasn't always the best behaved in the class but i did try my best sometimes. Looking back now i remember before i went to exodus i was very behind the rest of the class but exodus really helped me in many ways such as my behavior, my perspective on learning, my attitude to learning and of corse my reading. I recently went to my school library at lunch and borrowed two chapter books which i certainly wouldn't have done if i didn't go to exodus. One of those two books was called "The dead of the night" John Marsden which is the second serious of tomorrow when the war began, which was one of the books i read at exodus. I also borrowed a book that was based on a true story called "A long walk to water" that i have started to read every night before i go to bed to my dad and simply just for my enjoyment. Exodus has also help me very much in my new school "Marist Sisters Wollwich Collage" especially in english class.

THANK YOU!

Love Name Withheld xx

3.6.2011