

# Testimonial by FLO Participant.

"I started the FLO program almost 5 years ago and I can say I would not be the man I am today without the help of Baptist Care and to wonderful teachers at the [Community Learning Centre] CLC. I had a taste of regular high school learning and it was not my cup of tea. I was having trouble making it to class on time or even showing up at all. I eventually stopped going all together, just staying at home doing nothing. Eventually my dad brought me to a FLO campus, at first I thought I didn't even need help, thinking that I could just power through it and that it would mean I was weak if I went into FLO. How very wrong was I. I found FLO to be the perfect place to finish my schooling and gain my SACE. I was motivated to leave the house again. Whilst they were your normal classes, they were smaller in comparison to a high school. I was able to get help easily if I was stuck and I developed a better bond with my teachers.

The case managers were able to help me out so so very much, although I got a bit unlucky as I had three different case managers throughout my time at FLO each helped me in different ways. Alfred was my first and he helped me get introduced to FLO and all its possible ways to help me, then there was Andrew "Barky", he brought me out of my shell and helped me to be more chipper and active. Finally, there was Hannah, who was there for me when I was going through some of my roughest times emotionally. There were other case managers and staff that weren't assigned to me but deserve some honourable mentions. Tracey, who was there from the beginning and was always someone I could look to for guidance and a good laugh. Shanna was there to help me kick-start my job hunt and find some nice places to work. Cat, always had time to stop and chat if you had any problems being either emotional or just someone to vent to. There are a whole host of others I could talk about like Liam and his silly little pop culture quizzes. A different Andrew who I would chat about the latest big video games or Netflix show, or Fleur, who I constantly bantered with.

Oh and the adventures and opportunities. Through Duke of Ed I got to kayak and camp the Murray, hike through the beautiful landscapes of Tasmania for 8 days, and for the first time see snow and have a snow fight. With all these hikes and camps, I made some bonds with friends even stronger. I learnt the skills of a barista, first aid, self-defence and the appropriate qualifications to work behind a bar. Now, I am getting my Business Certificate III at TAFE.

I met so many people over my time in FLO that I would now consider friends and so many I see as family. That is one of the best parts of FLO in my opinion, whilst in a mainstream high school you make friends with the other students and teachers, in the CLC and FLO you make family."