Skills for Education and Employment Program

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2025



Nambour participants show latest edition of The Pineapple Press

The Pineapple Press hits Nambour!

Nambour participants in the STEPS Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) Program have launched a fresh and fun initiative to share their voices with the wider SEE community: a quarterly newspaper called *The Pineapple Press*!

The project began earlier this year in a Foundation Skills class, where the participants eagerly embraced the challenge of creating their own publication.

The first issue was proudly released in February, marking the official launch of the STEPS SEE Program in Nambour.

Designed to showcase the creativity, teamwork and talents of our participants, *The Pineapple Press* includes everything from gardening tips and recipes to stories about the STEPS SEE Program and jokes from the contributors.

Whether writing, illustrating or contributing ideas, each participant found a way to get involved and eagerly did so regardless of their level of literacy or confidence.

More than just a creative outlet, the newspaper has become a group-based activity that brings joy and pride to the class.

A special shoutout to key contributors George Jennings, Locklyn Ebert, Jodie Blandford, Gary Zealey, and Scott Martin. Your passion and hard work helped bring *The Pineapple Press* to life!

We're excited to see what the next edition has in store. If you're in the Nambour area, get your hands on a copy!



Cassie Stanley

Welcome

I am so excited to share our second edition of the STEPS Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) Program newsletter with you.

As you would have already seen on the front cover, our participants have been taking part in exciting hands-on projects. This helps them develop their skills in a fun and engaging way and inspires a sense of community, which is my favourite part of the STEPS SEE Program.

We've also highlighted two participants, San and Paul, and their personal achievements during their time with STEPS.

Finally, you'll meet Cassie – no, not me! This Cassie is one of our brilliant trainers in the SEE Program. Based in Caloundra, she talks about her experiences, what she loves about the STEPS SEE Program, and what her participants have taught her.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this newsletter, both trainers and participants. Their hard work every day makes SEE the supportive and life-changing program it is.

I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter just as much as I have, and I look forward to sharing more STEPS SEE Program news in the future! We also hope to see you at a STEPS Employment Expo event near you soon!

Cassie Stanley
Executive Manager of
STEPS Education and Training

Explore new opportunities

Looking to build your skills, improve your English or boost your confidence for work or study? The STEPS SEE Program is here to help.

Our free, government-funded training supports eligible participants and helps them develop essential skills, from maths and writing to using a computer.

Whether you're looking to take the next step in your career or know someone who could benefit, the STEPS SEE Program provides flexible and supportive learning tailored to your needs.
Apply today or refer a friend!

Together, we can open doors to new opportunities.





Cairns participants in Op-Shop



Pop-up Op Shop

In a creative blend of classroom learning and community spirit, our SEE participants in Cairns brought their Certificate III in Business studies to life with a successful Op Shop.

The project began during a fundraising meeting, where STEPS participants and team members brainstormed ways to support STEPS Pathways College, Australia's first and only live-and-learn model of education aimed at changing the future for young people with a disability and autism.

Two participants, Dallas and Chris, took charge of flyer design and spread the word to encourage visitors and donations to the Op Shop.

Soon, a steady stream of clothes, shoes, books, toys and household items began arriving, donated by STEPS team members, participants, and volunteers in the greater Cairns region.

The participants led every step of the project: pricing, categorising, creating signage, and setting up the space to welcome shoppers.

The Op Shop raised funds for STEPS Pathways College and was a meaningful, confidence-building experience for everyone involved!

San finds full-time work

After joining the STEPS SEE Program in Casuarina, San set out with one clear goal in mind: to find a job.

Keen to improve his literacy, numeracy and digital skills, San committed himself fully to the program and his job search.

He worked tirelessly on cover letters, online assessments, interview preparation and his computer skills, embracing every opportunity to grow.

Through the STEPS SEE Program, San strengthened his digital literacy and built the confidence he needs to navigate the modern workforce. He credits the kind support of his trainers for his progress, but they insist it's all in his positive attitude.

Now employed full-time in maintenance and cleaning at a local defence base, San is proud of how far he has come.

"I've really enjoyed my time at STEPS," San said.

"I've met amazing people and shared some great moments with my community."

San's story shows the power of persistence, a positive mindset, and the right support system.

Now that he has a full-time job and an array of new skills under his belt, he is looking forward to a future filled with opportunity.



Casuarina SEE Participant San

Trainer Profile



Cassie Van Beek, STEPS Caloundra

What do you teach participants?

I teach essential language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills that will help the participants build confidence and independence. We have a lot of different learners at the Caloundra site of all different ages, levels of education and backgrounds, so I aim to adopt a flexible approach to learning so we meet the needs of every participant.

What do your participants teach you?

Resilience and the importance of adaptability in education. Every learner comes with their own unique story and set of challenges and seeing them work hard and stay committed is incredibly inspiring. They remind me that learning is a lifelong journey and that small wins can be just as significant as larger achievements.

What has been a highlight of your time with STEPS so far?

Seeing the participants gain confidence in their computer skills. Many start out believing they can't do anything without me guiding them every step of the way. But over time, they only need help once or twice a session. It's very rewarding and meaningful work.

What is the most valuable thing you have learnt in your role?

Education isn't one-size-fits-all. Everyone has different needs, strengths and motivations. Creating a safe, supportive and engaging environment can make a huge difference in their learning journey. Plus, there's the community aspect. Sometimes, this is the first community our participants have ever felt fully accepted by.

What makes STEPS' SEE Program special?

I think it's special because it isn't just about education. It's actually about empowerment. The STEPS SEE Program is a welcoming and supportive space for adults to develop important skills at their own pace, without judgement. The sense of community and encouragement makes a massive difference in their motivation and success.

What advice would you give to someone who is thinking about joining the STEPS SEE Program?

Give it a go! The STEPS SEE Program is designed to support you, no matter where you're starting from. You'll be in a friendly and understanding environment where learning is tailored to your needs, and you'll be joining such a special community.

STEPS

see skills for education and employment

An Australian Government Initiative



SEE participant Paul with Trainer Waleve

Paul makes progress with new computer skills

After joining the STEPS SEE Program in Townsville, Paul has been hard at work developing the literacy, numeracy and digital skills he needs to build a more confident and independent future.

Having left school early and worked across several industries, including over a decade as a professional fisherman, he was ready to embrace a new challenge.

With support from the Townsville STEPS SEE Program team, particularly Trainer Waleve, Paul has achieved milestones that once seemed out of reach.

He's learned to use the MyGov and Medicare apps, send emails, and navigate computers – things that he'd previously relied on others to help him with.

"I've learned a lot in such a short amount of time," Paul said.

"Now, I can do things on my own, and that feels great."

Paul's journey is a reminder that it's never too late to learn. With the right support and attitude, new skills can lead to new beginnings.

SEE Program upcoming events

Employment Expo

Alice Springs, Bundaberg, Cairns, Darwin, Gympie, Hervey Bay, Sunshine Coast, and Townsville.

- Connect with employers and workplace training providers in your region and find exciting new opportunities for your career!

STEPS Decked Out Program

Practical workplace skills.

- Upskill in just eight weeks! Our new program helps you develop practical knowledge and gain confidence so you're ready to join or re-enter the workforce. To get Decked Out with job-ready skills, talk to our friendly team at 1300 131 965 or see@stepsgroup.com.au

Contact us

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The Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) Program is funded by the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

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