

“The best school I’ve ever been to”:

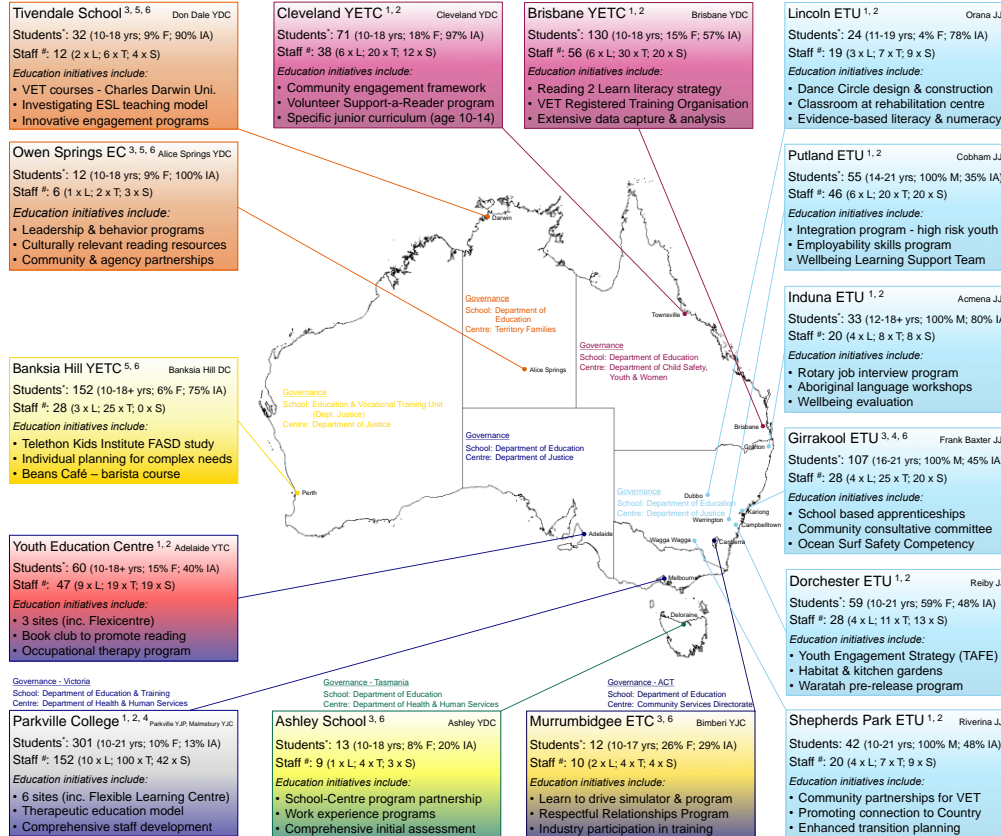
**Re-connecting with education in  
youth detention, Australia-wide.**

I would like to pay my respects to the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, and acknowledge that I live and work on their traditional lands.

I would also like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands on which we teach and from which our students come.

I would like to thank the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who support our efforts to provide relevant, quality education to people who are detained and incarcerated.

See separate poster file



# Common Challenges

There's a list, but...

If you imagine that, today, I am trying to impart some essential information to a continuously changing group of people, from all over the world, who speak a range of languages, have a variety of physical and cognitive challenges, and are easily distracted, while someone is banging on the window and making silly faces, and the conference organisers change every few minutes and each one decides on a new them and layout, you'll get the picture.

# Common Challenges

- Highly transient population –
- average no. Times in detention/year
- Average no. Seperate enrolments/year
- Short enrolment periods – average link
- Continual change to class, program membership
- High rates of disability, impairment, trauma, mental health problems
- Highly variable education & skill levels, within schools & classes
- Prior educational experiences limited, disjointed and/or negative

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- Prior educational experiences limited, disjointed and/or negative
- Disproportionate over-representation of Indigenous Australians
- Geographically large & diverse school catchment areas
- Multi-agency service provision environment
- Security & safety primary priorities within Centres
- Incidents/periods of volatility, instability, crisis

# Education in Youth Detention

In the time available, I cannot possibly adequately list, let alone describe, the range of education programs, strategies and initiatives developed and delivered in juvenile justice schools.

What follows are a few...

VCE  
Compass

Bakery  
Hospitality

# Education in Youth Detention

Boys to Men

Shopfitting  
Dance Circle

Yarning Circle  
Aboriginal Languages  
Construction

Living Skills  
Literacy  
Physical Education  
Anger Management  
Barista  
Kitchen Operations  
Cubbyhouse

Product Design  
Music Appreciation  
Bricklaying  
Tyrefitting  
HSC

SACE  
Our Journey  
to Respect

BKSB  
Hair & Beauty  
Digital Graphics  
Community Agency

Personal  
Learning Plan

Victim Awareness  
Native Bee Boxes

Days  
Respectful  
Relationships

Language & Culture

Furnishing  
Learner's Permit  
Conflict Resolution  
Driving Simulator

MULTILIT  
BroSpeak

Engineering

Automotive

Retail Operations

Business Studies

Horticulture

Breaking the Cycle

VCAL

Fitness

Warehousing Operations

Panel Repair

Hairdressing

Love Bites

CGEA

Sexuality & Relationships

Visual Arts

Drugs & Alcohol

Quicksmart

Stavroola Anderson

Mathematics

ROSA



## Widespread Strategies

- Comprehensive induction
- Nationally accredited Vocational Education & Training (VET)
- Alignment with Australian Curriculum & ACSF
- Intensive literacy & numeracy programs
- Short courses, themed days, extra-curricula activities
- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander perspectives
- Scaffolding & differentiation
- Individual education planning & personal learning pathways
- Transition planning & support

## Widespread Strategies

- High staff-student ratio
- Specialist teaching & support staff
- Strategic leadership & mentoring teams
- Flexible & adaptable daily timetable
- Extended school year
- Trauma informed practice
- Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL)
- Inter-agency consultation & collaboration within centre
- Community & external agency partnerships

# Idealism, realism, solutions, action

But, on reflection, the essential element for ensuring effective education in youth detention is the quality of the staff.

What follows is an example, to illustrate this.

**WARNING: confronting language on next slide.**

# Idealism, realism, solutions, action

Actual **student** reaction to a teaching intervention:

*Go fuck yourself up the arse with a dead dog, you cunt.*

# Idealism, realism, solutions, action

Standard **staff** response (juvenile justice schools):

**Understand** the complexity of the student's experience, and limited capacity to appropriately cope with stress & communicate needs.

**Address** the behaviour through a clear, consistent, evidence-informed approach to behaviour modification.

**Reflect** on the influences that may have contributed to the student's behaviour.

**Recognise** ways in which you may have contributed to the behaviour.

**Adapt** teaching & classroom management strategies to minimise future reactivity & promote more positive classroom & social engagement.

Continue to **teach** the student as if you believe they are worthwhile & capable (because you do).

## Idealism, realism, solutions, action

Actual intra-**staff** reaction following the incident:

- Teacher 1: *Gee, that sentence was well structured, though. Very clear messaging.*
- Teacher 2: *Yeah. And the non-verbals were mirrored the message appropriately.*
- Teacher 1: *Looks like our language & literacy strategies are having a bit of impact, then.*

If you are interested in further information about provision of education in the most exclusive boarding schools in the country...

# **Australasian Corrections Education Association Conference 2019: Unlock Your Potential**

Melbourne, Australia

Sunday 13/10/2019 – Wednesday 16/10/2019

<https://acea.org.au/2019/03/save-the-date-acea-conference-2019/>