

THE ULTIMATE ADVENTURE BRINGS HOPE



Young Life Australia's Ultimate Water Sports Tour took place in April, reaching out and supporting young people from towns and communities in western New South Wales.

The tour is an initiative of Young Life in the Central West and has enabled hundreds of young people from regional towns to experience the elements of a Young Life camp – in one concentrated day of fun.

The tour travels to Lake Burrendong, Nyngan, Lake Cargelligo and Condobolin, spending a day and night at each location.

"The 1066 kilometre round trip is pretty gruelling for the volunteers but worth it when the young people arrive on their buses having travelled 250km or so to be with you," according to regional manager, Heather Gant.

"This year we enjoyed fantastic weather and some special moments of seeing young people meet and overcome challenges.

"Two things really make the event. One is the enthusiasm of the youth services and regional councils who bring along their youth to meet us.

"The other is the volunteers who demonstrate a huge commitment and duty of care towards the young people."

"When they've packed up after a day of skiing and tubing and footy, they drive hours to do it all over again – just for the privilege of sitting and listening to a young person talk about their life and ask

Vital Statistics

Volunteers:	14
Kilometres:	1066 km
Young people:	230
Weather:	☀ Perfect
Injuries:	Nil

questions about God."

Heather Blackley, Youth Services Manager for Western Plains Regional Development Inc., has participated in the Ultimate Water Sports Tour since the beginning.

"We are thrilled with this event," she says.

"It has given our young people opportunities and confidence to have a go.

"Even though the youth hadn't water skied since the

CONTINUED OVERLEAF



THE ULTIMATE ADVENTURE BRINGS HOPE (cont)



tour last year, I was surprised and pleased to see how keen they were to stand up on the water. It's very special for our young people because they don't usually have a lot of confidence."

The day-long program involves splitting the youth into two groups and while one is out with the boats, the other plays sports onshore, giving the Young Life leaders time to chat and reconnect with young people they met the previous year.

"I like the Christian element of the day because many of our young people go to Sunday School, play music and sing at church," Heather Blackley says.

"The Young Life volunteers were great at remembering faces and noting who was good at football.

"I also noticed there was special connection made with some of our senior girls who were having solid, lovely conversations with girls on the Young Life team.

"For our young people, many of whom are in and out of Kinship Care, the chance to be with someone close to their age who doesn't speak down to them or make them feel bad is very positive," she says.

As Youth Services Manager, Heather Blackley oversees the Youth Centre Programs at Condoblin and Lake Cargelligo and provides catering for the tour on days three and four at Gum Bend Lake and Lake Cargelligo.

"We put the day on our Holiday Program and set aside some budget. We are exceptionally pleased with the partnership," she says.

The 2016 Ultimate Water Sports Tour was made possible thanks to the involvement of Adventure Watersports, Young Life Ski Mission and the financial partnership of the John Wallis Foundation.

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THE TWO OF US



Every week, friendships are formed between Young Life's volunteer leaders and the young people in their communities. Many of these friendships become life-long. In this issue we would like to introduce you to Laura Mansell. Laura is a trained childcare worker, works a day a week on the Young Life staff and volunteers with the Dubbo Young Life team. Here she is pictured with her friend and Young Life Club member, Brooke.

Laura, when did you first meet Brooke?

Laura: I met Brooke my first time at Young Life club in Dubbo as a new leader in October 2014.

What do you like about Brooke? What sort of person is she?

Laura: I love her laugh – it's so happy and it makes me smile. Brooke is such a happy, bubbly and friendly person. I love that whenever we get new people at club she's so welcoming and friendly.

What experiences have you shared?

Laura: One memorable experience we have shared is spending the afternoon together kayaking on the river, but probably the greatest experience was having Brookey in my cabin for Summer Camp 2016, and having a solid week of getting to know each other more.

Brooke, do you remember when you first met Laura?

Brooke: At Club, it was a movie night. I thought Laura was one of the kids because she looked so young.

What was she doing at the time?

Brooke: Talking to Karla.

How often do you meet up?

Brooke: Every Monday afternoon, and we see each other at club on Thursdays.

What do you like about Laura?

Brooke: Just Laura in general, there's nothing bad about Laura.

Can you name a memorable experience shared with Laura?

Brooke: The sleep over at Laura's place. I fell asleep early and the other girls drew on my face and took photos. And I enjoyed having Laura as my cabin leader at Summer Camp.

In news from Young Life areas around Australia, two new high schools welcome Young Life volunteers, a community walks the Sydney coastline to pray for young people and one of our Young Life families celebrates the arrival of a new baby. First, we hear from Hobart.

Young Life in **Hobart** held an Easter Camp this year with 19 young people attending – six of them first-timers. At the shared camp site, some other young people joined in and have been attending club ever since.

Committee chair Fudge Jordan says there is new energy at club with the arrival of Jacinda Durden on staff. Jacinda is working closely with three junior leaders who are all studying in grade 11 or 12 as well as doing Young Life's leadership development course.

Brendan Hatte, Young Life's **New England** regional manager and his wife Mel, welcomed a baby boy into their family in April. Mel is taking maternity leave as Young Life's Abide program coordinator and David Greeff has joined in Mel's absence. David has recently returned from Namibia where he spent 10 years serving through CMS as the principal at Namibian Evangelical Theological Seminary. "David has a strong heart for cross cultural ministry and that is our aim: on the youth front and on the indigenous front," says Brendan Hatte.

“Our connections with local congregations are growing and we are excited about our new Wyld Life Club and all of the relationships that are growing from that ministry.”

The planning for renovations at Young Life's new Training Centre in **Armidale** continues. "We are settling in," says Brendan Hatte. "Dennis Berend and Andrew Logan from the local community have been among those who have generously assisted us with their time and expertise."

Young Life in **South East Queensland** is looking for more leaders to support club events and is also about to commence breakfast club at Bundamba State Secondary School. Bundamba is the second largest school in the Ipswich area. The next event on South East Queensland's calendar is a camp in September at Lake Moogerah.

The Queensland team are also fundraising right now



Members of the Young Life Barossa Committee pictured from left to right are Megan Nicolai, Judith Hoffrichter, Paul Bert, CEO Glyn Henman, Michael Nokes, area manager Vicki Rochow, and Mark and Sophie Wilksch.



Praying for young people in the Eastern Suburbs and the Young Life start-up.

to expand chaplaincy at Alexandra Hills State High School. The school receives government funding for the position but would like to increase the number of days and have asked the community for donations. Young Life Australia currently provides chaplaincy services in 11 schools.

A Prayer Walk for Young Life in the **Eastern Suburbs** was held on May 28 along the beautiful stretch of coastline between Bondi and Malabar. Area manager Ben Staunton and staff member Becki Simadas were joined by church members from St Johns Anglican, Wild Street Anglican, Vine Church in Surry Hills and St Stephens Newtown in prayer for local young people and the new Young Life club commencing in Term 3. Work with local schools is underway. Becki Simadas who is a trained PE teacher

is helping with Sport at Randwick Girls High School.

Young Life in the **Central West** held its 5th Ultimate Ski Tour in April (see the article in this issue) and a Youth Mental Health First Aid training course in May. The area will have its retreat August 5-7 2016 at Lake Burrendong Sport and Recreation Centre. It is a weekend for staff, donors, committees members, volunteers and people who just have an interest in what Young Life is doing in the region. For more information visit the Young Life Australia website at www.younglife.org.au/events.

Barossa Young Life committee held a strategic planning weekend on the 2nd and 3rd of April. Area Manager Vicki Rochow says, "It was a great time with our CEO Glyn, as the committee enthusiastically planned for the future and looked toward the season ahead. Our connections with local congregations are growing and we are excited about our new Wyld Life Club and all of the relationships that are growing from that ministry."

Finance is the next biggest thing on the agenda, according to Vicki.

"We are now actively planning a campaign to get 100 donors in 2016! A massive task, but in true Aussie fashion we are going to give it a crack."

Lastly in news from **Canberra**, Young Life has appointed Georgia Gould as chaplain at Belconnen High School commencing on June 20, 2016.



wyldlife

DATE Wed 5th to Sat 8th October 2016

COST \$245 plus transport

LOCATION Lake Burrendong Sport and Rec Centre

REGO AND MORE INFO:
www.younglife.org.au/wyldlife2016

 YoungLife Australia

To donate visit
www.younglife.org.au/donate

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Please send me more information on:

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- ☐ Volunteers in Schools
- ☐ Serving on a local YLA Committee
- ☐ Sponsor a teen to Summer Camp
- ☐ Praying for the work of Young Life Australia

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Place
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Postcard
from WARREN, NSW



Tim and Hannah Commins have three young boys and live and work on a property outside Warren. Amelia Hosking has recently returned to the community she was raised in and they all love spending time with young adults in the community, telling them about Jesus and providing encouragement.

"At the moment Young Life club is held once a fortnight at the sporting and cultural centre in Warren. We have about 10 regulars with the numbers fluctuating," says Amelia.

"We were able to take 12 kids along to summer camp and they are still raving about it; and recently we took a busload to Nyngan to meet the Ultimate Water Sports Tour which was fantastic because our kids often complain there is nothing to do in the holidays."

Warren is a town of approximately 1500 people located on the Oxley Highway, 120 kilometres north-west of Dubbo.

There, local couple Tim and Hannah Commins along with Amelia Hosking, have started a Young Life club for the local young people.

According to Amelia, there is a desperate need for programs that are youth-focussed in small communities across Central and Western NSW.

"It is something the community recognises and has really welcomed Young Life's presence here," she says.

"The Council has been really supportive, providing us with access to great facilities and many individuals in the community are behind us, praying for us and helping us financially," Amelia says.

"At the moment we are looking forward to regularly holding club, recruiting some more leaders, and summer camp next year. We are also hoping to hold weekend activities like camping and fishing locally. Even a trip to Dubbo to go to the movies (yeah we are pretty remote)!"



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FROM OUR CEO Glyn Henman

The past month has been a busy time of gathering together the Young Life support base in each area around the country.

Sydney, the Central West, New England and South East Queensland all held fundraising dinners in May and we want to thank those who attended and brought along family members and friends to hear about what Young Life is doing in their local area.

For those who have never attended a Young Life fundraising dinner, it is a great time of reporting on the progress and activities that have taken place in the past year. Our area managers stand up and talk about the lives affected by Young Life and there is the chance to meet and hear from teenagers who attend Young Life club and camps.

In Sydney we had Collett Smart speaking to us on "Keeping a Brave Heart in a Complex World". Collett has a particular interest in the effect of technology on the self-image and safety of young people. Don't miss our interview with Collett in this issue.

Each Young Life area raised some additional funding through the ticket sales, raffles, auctions and the generous response of people at each event – so thank you. Your encouragement and generosity is very much appreciated.

Giving that changes lives

You may also have received a letter from me about Young Life Australia's end of financial year appeal. Would you please consider us as you make your tax deductible donations this year?

Donations to Young Life enable us to invest in employing and training our wonderful, dedicated staff and volunteers and also ensure we are able to subsidise Young Life events so that cost is no barrier.

Young Life Australia's mission hasn't changed in 44 years. It is to build confidence, values and resilience in Australia's young people through significant relationships with adults who model the love of Jesus Christ.

This mission involves connecting with teenagers in their world and committing ourselves to friendship, leadership and serving them in ways that support them at school and home.

This is why I am so excited about the establishment of Young Life in Warren, NSW and the Eastern

Suburbs of Sydney; and the news that our team in South East Queensland have been invited to run a breakfast club and other programs in support of students at Bundamba State High School.

New England will again be hosting their study camp for HSC students; and Wyldlife, our version of Young Life club for students in Years Six, Seven and Eight, has a camp on the calendar, bringing together groups from the Central West and Sydney.

From all of us at Young Life Australia, thank you.

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at Young Life
Australia,
thank you.**

Sydney Dinner Raffle Winners: Eastern Suburbs supporters Matt and Shel Varcoe, pictured here with Jonathan Stephen, were the lucky winners of an accommodation package at Jamala Lodge, The National Zoo Canberra. The prize was sponsored by Stephen Financial Solutions as part of Young Life Australia's Annual Fundraising Dinner in Sydney.



Brenda Cooper (left) and Kath Balnaves with Young Life CEO Glyn Henman.

Erin and Eland Cramlet with Susan Green (centre).



Sue Caruana and Collette Grundy at the Annual Fundraising Dinner in Sydney.



Colin Allerdice, Don Swanborough, Llew Morris and Young Life Australia Board member, Ken Ewald.

**Young Life comes
alongside young
people to walk their
journey with them.**

Connecting in their world
Offering support and role-modelling

Making a difference
Instilling confidence and values

Building resilience
Empowering and equipping to
navigate the challenges ahead



Our Mission Statement

Young Life seeks to build confidence, values and resilience in Australia's young people through significant relationships with adults who model the love of Jesus Christ.

TOO MUCH EXPOSURE:

TEENAGERS AND THE ONLINE WORLD

Teenage girls are being exposed to unwanted online harassment and adults are unsure of how to help according to adolescent psychologist and author, Collett Smart, who recently spoke to an audience of supporters and friends at Young Life's Annual Sydney Dinner.

"There are some great benefits to technology. It keeps us connected and is a source of information like we've never seen before. However our young people can feel constantly bombarded and always feel the need to be 'switched on' or 'on show'," explains Collett.

"Pornography in particular is an issue people still have their heads in the sand about, but if a young person has access to a mobile phone, laptop, tablet or any other internet-enabled device – or if they have any friends or siblings that do – it is very likely that they will see pornography, even if they never seek it out. It will find them."

The presence of online pornography is just one of the factors affecting teenagers. A recent report by Plan International and Our Watch sought responses from 600 girls from all over Australia and found that online sexual harassment is commonplace.¹

It found seven out of 10 Australian girls aged 15-19 believe online harassment and bullying is endemic and 60 percent believe girls are receiving unwanted sexual photos, videos and messages.

The survey particularly focused on girls' reactions: 81 percent of girls believed it was unacceptable for boyfriends to ask for explicit content although they felt pressure to do so was now commonplace.

"I think that too many parents do not think some of the main issues for youth actually face their own child. Unfortunately, when parents think, 'This happens to other people's children, not mine' they set their children up to fail or be hurt," says Collett.

"Yet, we are not helpless! I believe we are made for relationships and research proves this. People more connected to family, friends and to community are happier, physically healthier and they live longer.

"It is important to note it is not the number of friends one has or whether a person is in a committed relationship, but the quality of the relationships that matters. Having good warm relationships is the protective factor."

*Collett Smart and
Glyn Henman*



Collett says with regard to pornography, adolescents with higher degrees of social interaction and bonding are not as likely to consume sexually explicit material as their less social peers.

"And despite what we hear about a so-called generation gap between 'screenagers' and 'technology dinosaurs', research confirms teenagers value the help of friends, parents and family friends higher than the internet!²

"Relationships do matter," says Collett. "Young people want to hear from us."

Glyn Henman, CEO of Young Life Australia, said the message about online pornography being detrimental was one young men and women needed to hear from adults they trusted.

"I don't think it's an option to be shy about this issue," he says.

"We want teenage girls who come through Young Life to feel strong enough to reject unwanted pressure and part of that is having adult women listening, encouraging and offering a wise perspective.

"And we want teenage boys to look at the example of Jesus Christ, his love and integrity and compassion, and to make choices that are good for them and good for girls and women," he says.

"It's great to be encouraged by someone with Collett's knowledge about the impact positive role-models can have in protecting and shaping healthy, happy young people."

1 <https://www.plan.org.au/learn/who-we-are/blog/2016/03/02/dont-send-me-that-pic>

2 https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/publications/research/young-people/doc_download/413-mission-australia-youth-survey-2015



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