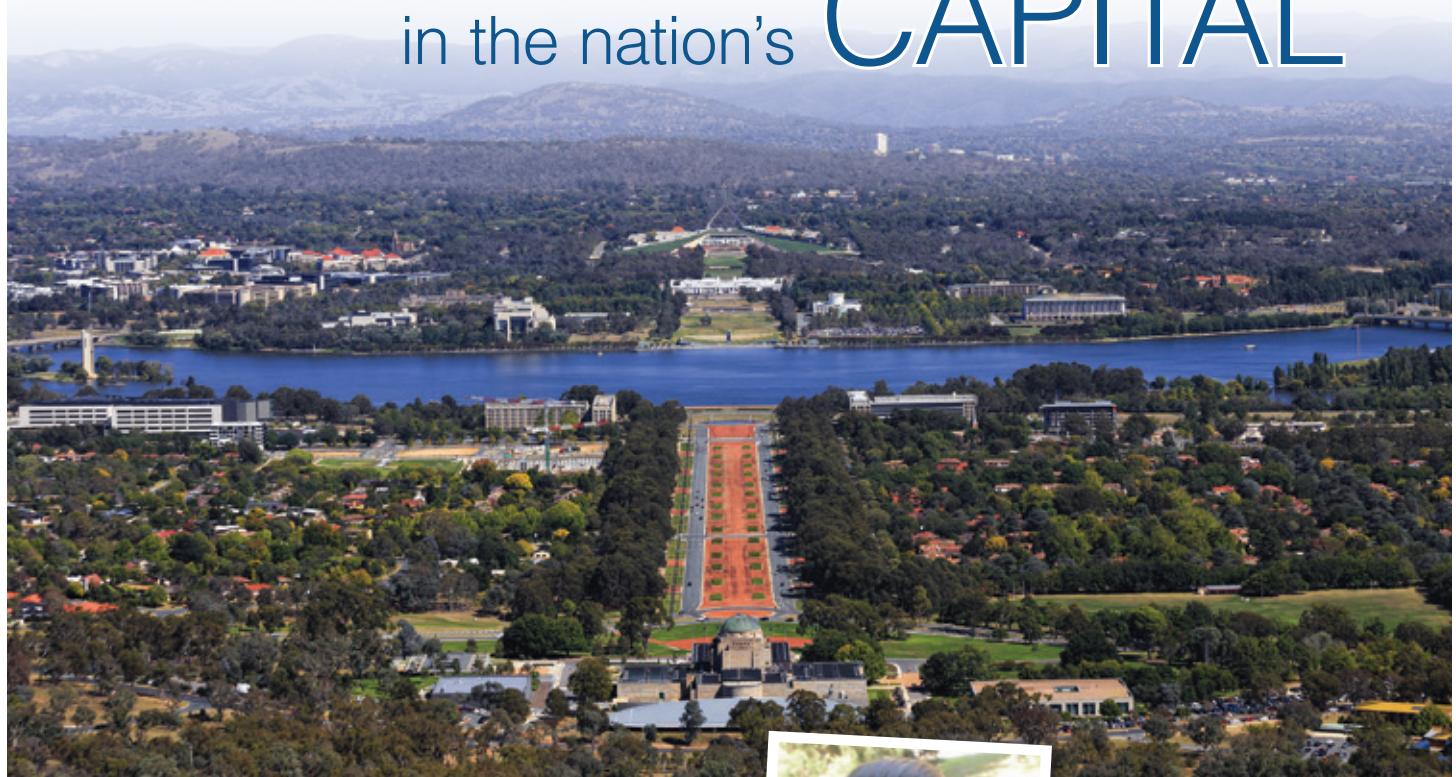


SCHOOL LIFE in the nation's CAPITAL



As 30,000 secondary students returned to school in the Australian Capital Territory, so did **Georgia Gould**, Young Life's chaplain to one of the many high schools in Canberra's suburbs.

Having moved to Canberra from Townsville last year, Georgia says she is gradually learning about life in the capital.

"One thing you notice, Canberra is not like other cities. There aren't that many young people in the centre," says Georgia.

"Instead there are a lot of young professional people. But when you come out to Belconnen, it's suburbia. This is where the families live."

Belconnen High School is a government high school for students in Years 7 to 10 where Georgia works two days a week to support students, families and staff.

"My week begins with a breakfast club on Wednesdays and a Young Carers support group organised in conjunction with Young Carers ACT and Anglicare."

"I take a number of students to the nearby Special School as work experience and I also attend Circus program sessions and provide a social skills program for some of the quiet students."

One of Georgia's other roles is to meet students who transfer into the school.



"Students need a friendly face to help them settle in, to help them find their class although many of them don't know what a chaplain is," says Georgia.

"Those who had a chaplain at their previous school are the quickest to say hello or seek me out."

Teachers will also suggest parents connect with Georgia if they think she can be of assistance.

"Parents are often relieved to know someone can meet their child and support them if they are struggling socially or emotionally. Or if something has happened at home."

In this way, Georgia meets regularly with a number of students.

Although it was the girls who Georgia was initially engaged with, she now finds staff are approaching

CONTINUED OVERLEAF

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TO SUMMER CAMP**

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SUPPORTS YOUTH**

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**A NOTE FROM
THE CEO**



SCHOOL LIFE IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL from page 1

her with a need among boys to help them deal with emotions like anger. And so she is seeking to build partnerships with non-government organisations such as MensLink.

"It's good to draw on organisations that have funding and accredited programs focussing on mental health issues as a way of strengthening the school community."

Georgia feels Canberra's main occupation, government and politics, may be having an effect on young people.

"I can't speak for the whole but young people are exposed to so much on their phones and in the news."

"The conversations they are having are so political. These students are having arguments about race, religion and money."

"I think living in Canberra means the news and major events are thrust upon you and students are forming opinions when they are very young – perhaps without the maturity to express those opinions kindly or wisely."

"If there is a lot of bullying towards minority groups within our schools, this could be one of the reasons."

She also says the lack of Christian literacy among high school students still has the power to catch her off guard.

"I am not allowed to bring up the subject of Christianity, unless a student initiates the conversation."

"Even so, I often have to explain what the word 'Chaplain' means and so many are meeting me with no understanding or exposure."

Even with the lack of awareness about her motivation as a Christian, Georgia finds her role as Chaplain very rewarding.

"I love it. It's really tough. There's times when you don't know if you are making a positive difference because young people don't show much until the very last, but it's definitely worth it."

GEORGIA FEELS
CANBERRA'S MAIN
OCCUPATION,
GOVERNMENT
AND POLITICS,
MAY BE HAVING
AN EFFECT ON
YOUNG PEOPLE.

THE TWO OF US



Introducing Young Life volunteer John Ryan (right) and Dan Williams, currently in Year 12. The pair have known each other through Young Life Bathurst since 2014. When Dan completes Year 12 he plans to become a mechanic. Currently John and Dan spend time together each Wednesday as John teaches Dan how to drive.

How long have you both known each other?

Dan: We have known each other for three years. I know him through Young Life.

John: Probably about three years now. We met at Kelso Community Hub. I remember little Dan rocking up. He was always friendly and he had a lot of empathy for the other kids. When something was wrong Dan wanted justice.

What is one thing you like about the other person?

Dan: He is just a great guy. His personality is awesome and he is great to get along with.

John: Probably his loyalty.

What is something you have in common?

Dan: We both love God.

John: Not our hair cuts, that is for sure... (ha, ha!). Probably a lot of things but we are also very different. We do get along very well. We both are good at building friendships because Dan loves people and I love people.

What is one memorable experience you have shared?

Dan: Summer Camp in 2014. It was just the best week. We were in the same cabin and it was an amazing week. Everything was fun!

John: Young Life camping trips to Newnes, where every year Dan will get his shoes wet before the walk to the glow worm tunnel.

Name something the other person passionate about and something they are great at.

Dan: Working with kids and trying to explain God to kids.

John: Dan is passionate about cars and he is great at cars.



SUMMER CAMP THE HEART OF

CAMP DIRECTOR'S REPORT

BEN STAUNTON

Summer Camp 2017 was great! I am always moved by seeing the young people change as the week goes on. They get to know each other and the people serving on camp and they really build together as a community. I love reading the young people's feedback after camp – "Best Week of My Life" is always in there.



I was really impressed by each of our volunteer teams. This year our volunteers were all willing and able to work together to make camp an amazing week for the campers.

My overall vision for Summer Camp is to keep thinking and praying about how to make this week the best week of a young person's life. This means constantly striving for excellence in every area of camp. Part of this is also growing camper numbers as our areas around the country grow.

I really believe the Summer Camp is the pinnacle of what we do at Young Life. Summer Camp is where it all comes together...amazing community, committed leaders, the great outdoors and an opportunity for young people to hear how valuable they are.



CAMPER FEEDBACK

Hello Young Life

Summer camp was amazing. This year I pushed myself to complete everything which I'm pretty sure I did including the long track on Mt Kosciuszko. I met so many new people and even saw some people from last year. I am really considering coming again next year but as work crew!!! The talks hit me really hard, I loved them and a few even made me cry. They really helped me realise how much more I want to know about God and how much more I want to tell other people about God and all his wonders.

THANK YOU, YOUNG LIFE FOR MAKING SUMMER CAMP HAPPEN. IT WOULDN'T IF IT WEREN'T FOR YOU GUYS, SO THANK YOU LOADS FROM EVERYONE INVOLVED IN YOUNG LIFE!

– Maddison Bridge, Uralla NSW

CABIN LEADER'S REPORT

ANSIA KLAVINS

For cabin leaders, it is hard to describe how full-on the week is for them. Not only do they spend every minute of every day with the campers, there is a huge emotional investment involved. And just like children, the more you invest, the more the campers will push back. It can be heart-breaking!



My role with the help of Adrian Klavins, Marion and David Arblaster and James and Tori Poulos, was to get alongside the leaders and teenagers who were struggling the most.

One young girl was so hostile during cabin time, she had her cabin leader in tears. But by Thursday as her cabin leader and Marion persisted in supporting her, she began to soften, to listen and give herself the space to ask questions.

For Adrian, the week was really enjoyable. He loved spending time with the young guys. The boys really have fun and enjoy having the opportunity to have good conversations.

It's a privilege to hear them talk about their lives and help them work through some of the hard stuff they face.



My favourite camp was being on the ski lift for the first time meeting new people

– Jo, Armidale



GLYN HENMAN

OUR CEO

In THIS ISSUE of Connections, we look back on Young Life's national Summer Camp which was held in Jindabyne during January. Summer Camp is always a highlight because it brings our teams and volunteers from around Australia together in a mammoth joint effort. This year there were 140 adult volunteers at camp which sets a record and puts us in a fantastic position to grow the numbers of young people who can attend. Having a strong adult presence at camp is important for several reasons.

Being able to respond to any given situation is extremely important to us but we also want to take care of the young people individually. Young Life is not about crowd control; it is a relational ministry. The real work happens in conversations.

So thank you to the volunteers who were willing to make themselves available: to chat, laugh, encourage, listen to and have fun with the campers.

Summer Camp is above all, a chance to show Jesus Christ to young people. Our hope teenagers will choose to follow Jesus is what brings us back together year after year.

On a change of subject, High School education has been in the news yet again, mostly to do with how we rank as a nation but the ABC has also aired a program all about Year 12 from the perspective of the young people completing their final year called *My Year 12 Life*.

If you haven't seen this program, and you have senior students in your family or you know young people approaching their exams, I recommend it to you.

Young Life volunteers share the Year 12 journey with many of the teenagers we meet.

As students struggle to cope with stress and expectations, Young Life aims to bring a positive and hopeful perspective.

Thank you for supporting Young Life on our journey alongside young people.

Volunteer for Summer Camp 2018

Visit our website and fill in
an expression of interest!

We'll contact you later in the year.



DID YOU SEE US ON
facebook



Young Life Australia

19 January ·

Our campers have taken every challenge in their stride at Summer Camp - their enthusiasm and determination are amazing!



Comments

Tania Jordan What an amazing bunch of kids we have had from around Australia. This camp has totally rocked.



Young Life Australia shared their video.

4 February at 16:28 ·

Thank you team Young Life. The volunteers are the life blood of what Young Life does.



Comments

Melinda Parker Being a YL volunteer decades ago, was one of the best things I got to do in my life!!! Sometimes at 56 I still consider it

Teresa Pomente Thank you. My daughter said it was the best camp she has ever been to.

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK BY FOLLOWING

YoungLife Australia

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.

Small Community Mobilises for Summer Camp

Warren, a town in Central Western NSW with a population of a little over 1500, is one of the newest communities to welcome Young Life. This summer saw nine teenagers and six volunteers from the town attend the National Young Life Australia Summer Camp.

The community of Warren gathered around their young people and helped contribute to getting them on camp – there was a bike donated and a raffle held. There were individuals who financially contributed.

The Warren Rotary Club also pledged money to assist getting their teenagers to camp. They have generously engaged with Young Life in Warren, as well as helped some younger community members to Wyld Life Camp in September last year.

"THERE WAS A BIKE DONATED AND A RAFFLE HELD. THERE WERE INDIVIDUALS WHO FINANCIALLY CONTRIBUTED."

Rotary representative Rod Sandell says Warren Rotary and Rotary in general try to be supportive of any project or organisation that has a positive impact on the lives of the youth of Australia.

"Through Young Life's presentations at Rotary we believe the organisation is having a positive impact on the young people who participate in the program.

"Life skill experiences and the ability to speak publicly, are essential gifts to our youth if they are to grow into confident, positive well rounded members of our community."

John Ryan was cabin leader to the enthusiastic group of boys from Warren. He appreciates the generosity many in the community have shown.

"Limited finances often restrict young people from accessing great life changing experiences, be it education, training or even a week of adventure.

"Because of the extraordinary activities that Young Life provides on their camps, it can often be expensive to go.

"Without the financial support from Rotary, the young people from Warren would find getting to camp a huge challenge."

Each time Rotary has partnered with Young Life



Summer Campers visited Warren Rotary Club following their week in Jindabyne during January.

Warren financially, they have invited the young people they have invested in to share their time away.

"The members of Rotary love to hear from young people about their adventures with Young Life, and we recently returned for dinner meeting to share experiences of camp," says Young Life volunteer, Taylor McCloskey.

"It is so encouraging to have the support of Rotary and to see the Warren community values the work of Young Life in our town."

Heather Gant, Young Life's Regional Manager for Central West NSW, says visiting the community groups who have provided support "multiplies the opportunities for young people as they meet more adults who are positively impacting their lives".

"It takes the whole community – teenagers, volunteers, Young Life committees, staff, donors, prayer partners, parents, schools, churches and councils – for this work to be happening."



A Summer Camp photo momento with the campers from Warren and Taylor McCloskey (pictured front and right).



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