

YMCA YOUTH

Back**2**School
Program





YMCA's Back2School program is a short term alternative education program for young people who have disengaged with school.

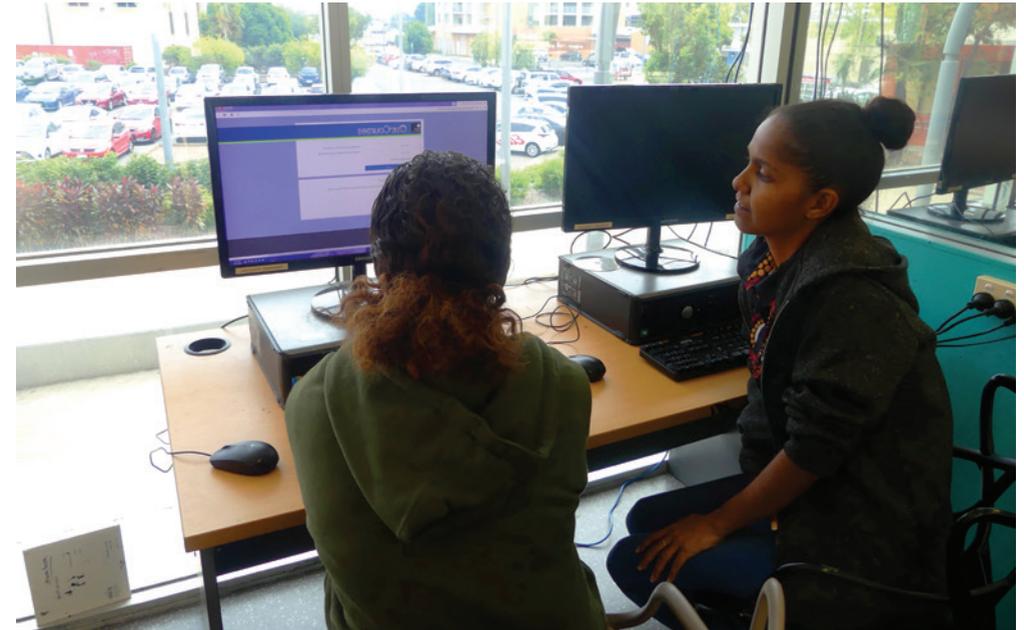
The Back2School program is for young people from grade 9 and above who may currently be disengaging from school for a number of reasons, including: mental health issues, behavioural issues, alcohol and drug use, delayed academic levels, extended periods of missed school or difficulty coping with mainstream school schedules. The Back2School program aims to provide young people with a flexible environment to get into the habit of a structured routine relevant to school and work timetables, develop their literacy and numeracy skills and look for opportunities in school, training or employment that suit their needs and interests. The Back2School program is funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and due to this generous funding, there are no costs associated with being in the program.

The Back2School Program runs from 9.30am to 2.30pm from Monday to Wednesday during the school term at YMCA's Palmerston Youth Space. The Back2School program is based around a 10 week schedule. However, each young person becomes ready to reengage at different times, therefore some students may stay in the program longer, or leave the program earlier than the 10 weeks. Each young person's time frame in the program is individually assessed and includes discussions with their guardians and school. YMCA can provide ongoing support to young people once they return to their enrolled schools, offering in-school support sessions to help young people with their studies and assignments.

On Thursdays and Fridays each young person has a different arrangement. For some young people, they return to their enrolled schools for their regular Thursday and Friday classes. For other young

people, Thursday and Friday is used to explore work experience, volunteering and employment opportunities. For young people who have been disengaged with school for an extended period of time, three days of structured programs is a lot, so Thursdays and Fridays can be used to rest and rejuvenate for the next week. Each young person is different and their literacy, numeracy and weekly schedule is individually catered to meet their needs.

The Back2School program runs at a maximum capacity of around 20 students. This allows YMCA to work with young people in small groups, better cater to each young person's needs and give more individualised assistance.



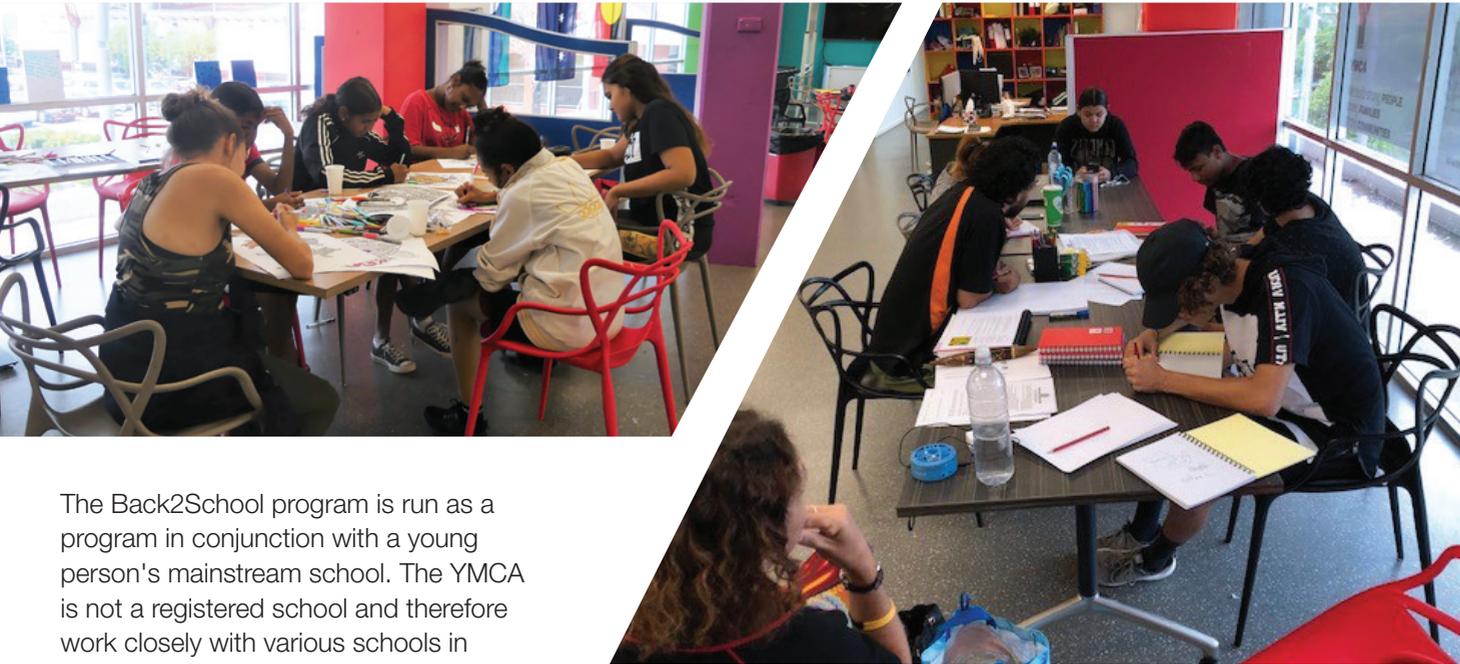
As part of the Back2School program, YMCA provides case management to each young person in the program. As part of this case management, staff work with the young person to identify their individual needs and goals. Goals are set for each young person and worked towards throughout their time in the Back2School program. These goals can be related to anything in a young person's life that they are wanting to work on. YMCA actively communicates with the young person's school, parents and other relevant agencies to work towards goals and set them up on a path towards success.

Once a young person has completed their time with the Back2School program, they still have the option of receiving case management with the YMCA to continue working on their goals. This could be further assistance in employment, apprenticeship, training, driver licence pursuits, in-school support and social/emotional support.



WORKING WITH SCHOOLS

LITERACY AND NUMERACY



The Back2School program is run as a program in conjunction with a young person's mainstream school. The YMCA is not a registered school and therefore work closely with various schools in the region to ensure the young people in the Back2School program remain connected with their schools and are doing work relevant to their education. The optimum goal for Back2School is to get young people reengaged with their enrolled schools.

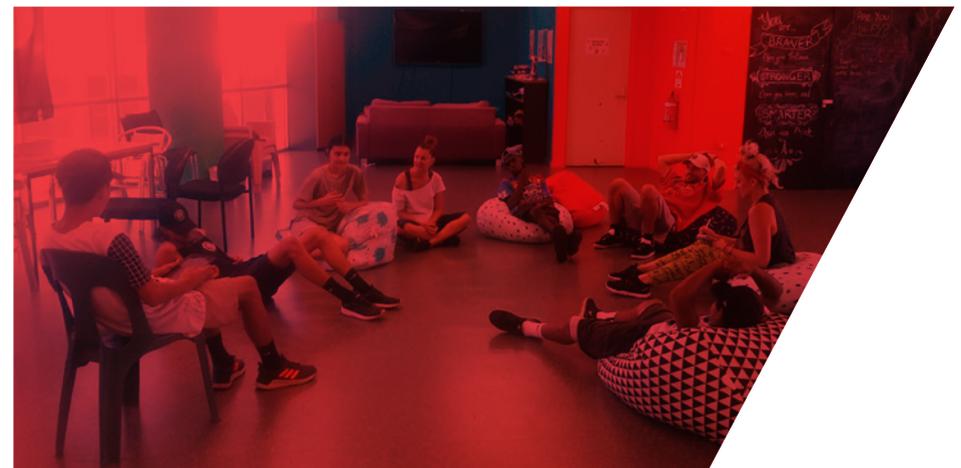
While enrolled in the Back2School program, a young person's attendance to the program counts as engagement in school. Each young person's attendance is reported to their enrolled schools weekly so that their engagement in

school related programs is reflected to the Department of Education. While in the Back2School program, young people remain students of their enrolled school and are engaging in their education as per their legal requirements.

YMCA continues working with schools once a young person has been reengaged and can offer in-school support sessions to the young person to assist them with their studies.

Due to the relevance of literacy and numeracy in every day life, the Back2School program focuses predominantly on English and Maths. For most young people, Maths and English work is provided by their enrolled schools. This allows young people to keep up with their peers and allow a smoother transition back into school when they are ready to return.

A young person's literacy and numeracy work within the Back2School program is individually assessed and catered for. Schools provide YMCA with Maths and English work for a range of education levels. YMCA also has access to further literacy and numeracy resources to support different levels of ability and understanding. The work that a young person does in the Back2School program is communicated back to their enrolled school to ensure the school knows the level and abilities of the young person when they return to school.



WELLBEING

INDEPENDENCE



Throughout their time in the Back2School program, young people will have the opportunity to participate in wellbeing sessions. YMCA works with various other organisations and agencies to deliver relevant wellbeing discussions and activities to young people. In the past, YMCA Wellbeing sessions have included topics such as: mental health, alcohol and other drug use, identity, culture, sex, relationships, emotions, social media, peer pressure, and more.

Often in referrals to the Back2School program, young people have particular wellbeing needs. YMCA aims to align the content of the wellbeing sessions with the needs of the young people currently in the program.



Due to the age bracket of the young people in the Back2School program, YMCA see many young people setting similar goals around independence. During their time in the Back2School program, young people will have the opportunity to work towards independence with assistance from YMCA staff. YMCA works on living skills with young people such as budgeting, planning and cooking. YMCA can also assist young people in obtaining bank accounts, tax file numbers, driver licences, Centrelink allowances and various forms of identifications. YMCA

can also help young people create resumes and cover letters and assist them in looking for employment.

YMCA in partnership with the NT Department of Education and the Brotherhood of St Laurence will be offering the option for young people to complete a Certificate I in Developing Independence as part of the Back2School program.

YMCA can continue assisting young people to be more independent after they have finished the Back2School program through our case management services.

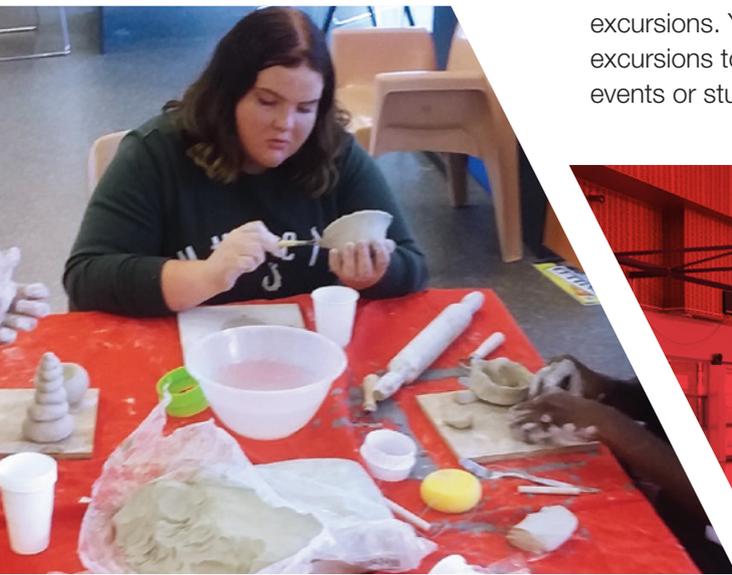
EXTRA CURRICULAR

The Back2School program is forever evolving and looking for new and exciting ways to engage young people. YMCA recognize that young people do not want to do literacy and numeracy all day, and focus on extra curricular activities in the afternoon. The afternoons in the Back2School program give young people a chance to engage in a constructive activity they enjoy, whether it be art, woodwork, music, dance, fitness, sport or craft. YMCA works with young people to gauge interests in activities to develop long

term projects for young people to work on, or bring in external providers to run workshops in different areas of interest.

To develop life skills and knowledge around nutrition, YMCA also provide a range of cooking opportunities for young people in the Back2School program. This regularly involves the choosing, planning, preparing and cooking of meals for the class. It also includes desserts and treats for those who have a particular interest in baking.

The Back2School program's extra curricular activities also extend to excursions. YMCA has previously held excursions to places relevant to local events or student interest.



WORKSHOPS AND SHORT COURSES

Throughout the year, YMCA hosts workshops and short course days that give young people the opportunity to gain acknowledgment or certification of their learning. These workshops focus on skills and qualifications that assist young people's employability and personal development.

YMCA have previously assisted young people in obtaining their First Aid Certificates, Food Handling Certificates, Driver Licences (through the DriveSafe program), Working with Children (Ochre) Cards and Construction Induction (White) Cards.





For more information about the
Back2School Program, contact:

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Australian Government

Department of the
Prime Minister and Cabinet

