

### St Augustine's Education and Training

St Augustine's Education and Training supports families, mainstream schools and other agencies in the Geelong region in their efforts to keep children and young people connected with education and learning. It utilises a range of responses to re-engage young people in learning, and then to provide stimulating, practical and rewarding educational options.

St Augustine's Education and Training incorporates two separate schools: St Helen's School, and St Augustine's School.

**St Helen's School** supports primary aged children between five and twelve years who are experiencing severe difficulties at school.

**St Augustine's School** incorporates:

- **St Augustine's School** – engages 15 young people aged 12 to 14 who are disconnected from education.
- **St Augustine's New Street** – offers a transition to work program for 25 young people aged 14 to 16 years who are disconnected from education;
- **Primary EMU** (Education Mobile Unit) – maintains 14 at risk children aged 5 to 12 years in mainstream education;
- **Secondary EMU** (Education Mobile Unit) – maintains 14 at risk young people aged 12 to 16 years in mainstream education.

**Youth Ed-venture Program** (YEP) – 8 young people aged 13 to 16 years

**Second Chance** (third and fourth semesters 2000) – a pilot program to reconnect young people not attending school.

**Education Support** – ensures access to education for children and young people in residential care.

**Program Manager:**

Br Russell Peters to June 2001.  
Amanda McMahon (from June 2001 – June 2002)

**Staff:**

8 full-time teachers, 6 full-time youth workers, 4 part-time teachers, 2 part-time youth workers, 1 instructor and activity worker, education support worker

**Expenditure budget:**

\$1,455,612

### Highlights

During 2000/01, St Augustine's Education and Training

- Provided flexible education and training options for over 100 children and young people through its various services;
- Won a Best Practice Grant to document the model of practice used in the Youth Ed-venture Program;
- Relocated St Helen's School to St Augustine's Whittington, to bring all services to the one site;
- Received an increase in funding to extend the EMU program;
- Received funding to pilot the Second Chance program in terms three and four to reconnect young people not attending school with schooling and education.





## A Parent's View

***The following extract is from a letter written in support of additional funding, by a parent of a student at St Helen's School. Notwithstanding this parent support and a long waiting list, St Helen's numbers have been severely cut because of uncertain funding.***

(My son) Steve is a clever 9 year old boy with Asperger's Syndrome (an autism spectrum disorder), is socially and emotionally impaired and had developed very challenging behaviours. Everyone was at a loss as to how to help him. Steve was one of the saddest, angriest and most disruptive people I had ever seen.

We visited St Helen's in March 2000. My ears were buzzing on hearing the Principal make comments like "Building up the children's self esteem"...."We expect them to do something good, we are not waiting for them to make a mistake"....."Every day is a new day".....

I cannot express the sheer relief when Steve was enrolled at St Helen's soon after. Steve knew he needed help and that St Helen's could help him. Steve felt better knowing he was not the only child having problems with his behaviour. Steve now wanted to go to school!

Five months later I am still in awe at what the staff do to make this school achieve such remarkable results. Steve now can't wait to go to school and he is even smiling! He is more settled..... He is enjoying the rewards for doing well, and he is learning to cope if he has not done well enough. He is finally learning that his behaviour can have good and not good consequences. One of the most important things I have learnt is that **Steve has to learn to make the right choices for himself – now and in the future.**