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# AISACT Emerging Leaders Capstone Project

Insights into creating connectedness  
through student voice and agency

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Truth  
Compassion  
Wisdom

Kylie Coll



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## Context

*'It used to be great in Year 6; everyone was really close. Then in Year 7 new kids came and everyone just divided up into groups.'* (Victoria)

*'There are so many different groups in Year 9 and no, they don't mix. I mean, people are nice to each other in class but, like, we don't really mix.'* (Tom)

*'I'd like us to be one big close group like the Year 11s and 12s are.'* (Charlie)



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# Objective

- To engage students as active partners to create positive change in the Year 9 community





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# Objective – Strategic Directions

**Radford College wants students to:  
be personally and socially aware leaders...and  
have healthy relationships with staff and peers.**

**Radford College commits to:  
cultivating social, personal and emotional  
capability by implementing an age-appropriate  
pastoral care curriculum that supports the  
Radford learner.**



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# Research

**‘Students who feel appreciated and supported typically feel more connected to their school community.’ (MindMatters)**

**‘It is important to recognise that students have unique knowledge and perspectives about their schools...’ (Mitra, 2004)**

**‘In activities with a focus on student voice, a sense of agency particularly focuses on the notion that youth ideas are to be heard and respected’ (Costello, Toles, Spielberg, & Wynn, 2000).**



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# Initial Observations

- **Inconsistency in pastoral staff & groups**
- **Lack of cohesion in student body**
- **Ethos of caution and distrust**
- **Wellbeing concerns**
- **Parent concerns**



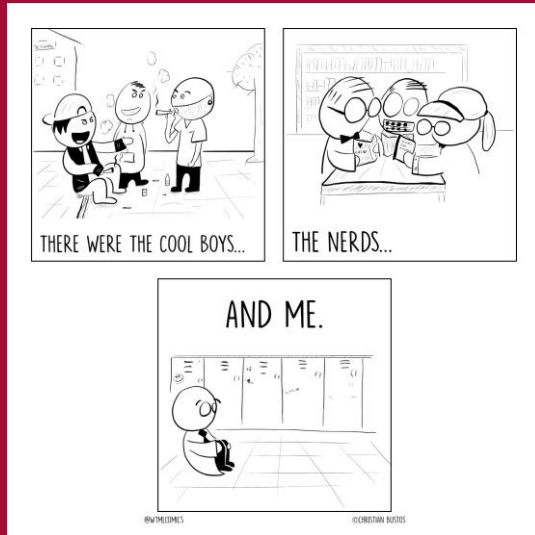


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# Initial Observations

**‘Tell Them From Me’ survey (June 2018):**

- **Decreased motivation and interest in learning**
- **Higher tendency to miss school days without a valid reason**
- **More reports of bullying and exclusion**
- **Higher number of students with anxiety**
- **Less positive self-esteem**





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# Actions & Interventions

- **Informal student focus groups**
- **Individual student interviews**
- **Establishment of student group**
- **Mixed camp groups**
- **Year 9 Student Survey**





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# Outcomes

- **Student survey – 95% response rate - rich data**
- **More students voicing concerns/opinions**
- **Students critiquing their environment**
- **Positive relationships with HOY**
- **Student group – developing leadership skills**
- **We still have a long way to go!**



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# Reflections – Challenges

- **Student perceptions**
- **Reluctance to get involved**
- **Staff perceptions**



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# Reflections

More random group things like camp.

Do more activities involving students getting to know people in different friendship groups as our year is super cliquey

People stop being fake and need to chill out when it comes to certain aspects of life. also no more rumours and gossip

Smile at more people to make them feel more accepted even if they already do.

have more times where we can talk to our teachers or head of year about mental wellbeing and concerns that the students may have.

Be more open to talking to new people

I liked how we didn't get to chose our camp groups. I thought it was bad before we went but it turned out really good because I got to make new friends.

do stuff with people outside my main group of friends

I think that I could a little more open-minded about other students in the cohort.

Activities that break up small groups, so that the cohort mixes more. Activities could include, sports, opportunities for people to do things with people that aren't their close friends.



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## Future Directions – Year 10 & Beyond

- Build on work of student group
- Student group representative at tutor meetings
- Focused chats with individual students
- Survey – Term 4

**"The child who is not embraced by the village will burn it down to feel its warmth."**

**- African Proverb**