

## **NSE005 Ep1 Transcript**

### **Jazmine (Host)**

Hey, welcome to the first episode of EPPPTV. My name is Jazmine Huggins and I'm a music journalist, DJ, radio producer and painter. In the past I've produced at Triple J across Breakfast, Drive, Good Nights and Like a Version. On that if you haven't checked out Billie Eilish's cover of Michael Jackson's Bad you definitely should.

Anyway a few years ago I was sitting where you are, trying to figure out what I was going to do after school and that's why I'm really excited to be here at the New South Wales Department of Education's head office in Parramatta talking about a new initiative. It's called the educational pathways pilot program or EPPP for short.

So what is the EPPP we'll let our guests talk more about the specifics of the pilot but basically the EPP was launched this year in southwest Sydney in northern New South Wales to improve higher education and career outcomes for young people. The pilots all about strengthening New South Wales education approach to vocational learning, which is great as someone who wasn't interested in pursuing the standard school university career pathway I can definitely relate, figuring out what I wanted to do in life was hard enough but when you don't even know what options are available to you it can be really tough but enough about that let's talk about EPPPTV.

This episode will meet the people who are currently rolling the program out in schools and we'll see what they have to say about how the EPPP will help people like you get a better sense of what lies beyond school but first up let's hear from Rose Vujcic.

Thanks joining us today Rose.

### **Rose (Guest)**

Thank you

### **Jazmine (Host)**

Firstly can you explain what a careers head teacher does and why it's such an important job?

### **Rose (Guest)**

Sure, head teacher careers is a new role as part of the EPPP project and as the head teacher careers I look after the Campbelltown cluster of schools and part of my role is to lead and drive the careers immersion team which is made up of school representatives and external partners and the main goal is to cater to the needs of the students within the schools because everyone will have a particular need and the idea is to build industry partnerships with schools to facilitate some of the workplace experiences that our students need so that they have a better understanding about what they can do in the future and to help them make some informed decisions along the way.

**Jazmine (Host)**

Okay, so what kinds of things are you helping careers advisors implement in their schools?

**Rose (Guest)**

Sure, it's helping careers advisors but also working very closely with a team of people, so thus far I've been working with careers advisors deputy principals I've put out expressions of interest to students and to parents. So sometimes parents are also referring their students to me and on top of that we have deputy principals who work very closely with their students have a real understanding of the needs of their students and we're building a group of students who have interests in school-based apprenticeships and traineeships who need assistance with transitioning beyond school there are students who are looking to access under 17 wraparound services at TAFE. We have edge workshops that are coming up that look at building capacity and students preparing them for the world of work, so there's lots of things going on within schools and the idea for my role is to facilitate some of those activities and to also look at the needs of the school and the students themselves and hopefully cater to their needs and build on those relationships with industry.

**Jazmine (Host)**

When do you think students should start thinking about their careers?

**Rose (Guest)**

The earlier the better and a lot of families already have those conversations around the dinner table, so parents and carers are talking to their children about the roles that they play and the types of careers that they might have had in their lifetime, I think it's really crucial to have those conversations early and you can do that differently depending on the stage the child is at but certainly it's crucial begin those conversations the earlier the better.

**Jazmine (Host)**

Yeah and what are some of the new opportunities that are available to students thanks to the EPPP?

**Rose (Guest)**

Sure, across the five clusters in New South Wales there are a lot of different programs that are being run. I can give you one example for Campbelltown that we're organizing at the moment and that is to run mock interviews for the four schools that I'm involved in and part of that is working with industry to look at what is current practice when it comes to interview techniques and that's been an eye-opener in talking to industry. There are students for example who may not realize that there are group interviews that take place, there are meetings that might take place on a phone and sometimes if you if you're not successful at that early stage you don't get to the second round of interviews, so helping students understand what they need to do and how they need to prepare is critical and one of the strategies that we're using is to partner with industry to help us deliver that message consistently across the schools.

**Jazmine (Host)**

So for the students listening now what advice could you give to them if they've kind of changed their mind about the career path they wanted to undertake.

**Rose (Guest)**

Oh look I think it's perfectly fine to change your mind. We all do it throughout our lives. So if they do change their mind it's about looking at options and then in particular if you're talking around subject selection for example keeping your options and your subject choices as broad as possible is a good idea but to never think that there's a closed door. There is always a pathway and you just need to talk to the right people to find out what those pathways are.

**Jazmine (Host)**

And what about COVID-19 because I know it's affected everything over the past couple months. How has it affected the rollout of the EPPP in the Campbelltown cluster?

**Rose (Guest)**

We've looked at things differently so we know that students have been learning remotely they're sitting at home, they're at a you know a desktop or using some sort of device to connect with their schools and their teachers. One of the projects that we have developed in the southwest Sydney cluster of schools is careers talks. So we're engaging with businesses, employers, employees and listening to their stories and we've also invited student co-hosts to take part because we want that to be an authentic experience for them but engaging with students whether they're at school or at home is about communications so we find a way we always find a way and I certainly have a lot of students on my on my books at the moment who are already looking at school-based apprenticeships and traineeships for next year.

**Jazmine (Host)**

That sounds fantastic thanks so much for joining us Rose

**Rose (Guest)**

Thank you.

**Jazmine (Host)**

Robyn Pemberton is the leader of the vet programs for secondary students here at education.

Let's see what she has to say about how students can benefit from these opportunities.

Hi Robyn, it's great to chat to you. I wanted to start by getting a sense of what's involved with an SBAT, there's probably students watching this who've never heard of an SBAT before. Can you give us a quick rundown of school-based apprenticeships and traineeships?

**Robyn (Guest)**

Absolutely. Essentially an SBAT is a very different and exciting way of doing your high school certificate. So what you're really doing is combining paid employment with training and all of your other HSC subjects.

**Jazmine (Host)**

Okay and what kinds of opportunities are available to students in the EPPP schools?

**Robyn (Guest)**

In the EPPP school students will have access to a range of different programs that we're trialing to support them to choose the best career pathway for them. So it's really about igniting their interest and their passion in a particular industry or occupation that they think they might enjoy and that they might be good at after they leave school. So it's providing that wraparound support to them and we're also trialing new and different ways of running the SBAT programs so we're looking at when you can start an SBAT, which is usually at the end of year 10 beginning of year 11. We're looking at opening it up to the pilot schools to trial starting a school-based apprenticeship at the beginning of year 12 where a lot of students make decisions in year 11 about whether they want to stay at school or potentially go on and often they think oh no it's too late to do an SBAT. So we're opening up that pathway to students at the beginning of year 12.

**Jazmine (Host)**

That's great. That's fantastic, so we're just talking about traditional trades or are there options that are more diverse than that?

**Robyn (Guest)**

Look, absolutely traditional trades are still there. We all know that there are many skill shortages for skilled occupations in construction and certainly in other areas such as health but certainly there's lots of new and innovative industries opening up and young people are already working in these jobs. We had an example where a young person was working in a surfboard shop and was doing a bit of surfboard shaping with the owner. They went to school and asked whether there was a traineeship available, there was and so we had that young person employed as a school-based trainee doing surfboard shaping. So that's really different and it can follow your passion and your interest area.

**Jazmine (Host)**

Wow, I've heard that you can even do beekeeping as well.

**Robyn (Guest)**

Absolutely and that's a really, you know a big thing in terms of the industry so we're looking at industries that are sustainable that are looking at the environment and a lot of young people are definitely interested in the environment. So lots to do in agriculture and horticulture as well.

**Jazmine (Host)**

And how do SBATs differ from other vocational training opportunities that are available to New South Wales students?

**Robyn (Guest)**

The main difference is that you can do a vet course as part of your HSC. But with the SBAT you're also employed and you're being paid to undertake that training on the job and that's really significant and important because a lot of the learning that you do many students are hands-on they like learning and they like doing stuff with their hands and that's definitely part of what doing in an SBAT all about. It's being in the workplace and having an understanding of what that means they're not only developing technical skills but they're developing all of those really important employability skills like teamwork, communication, getting to work on time. So that's really a big part of their personal growth as well.

**Jazmine (Host)**

I've heard that you've just hired four new SBAT mentors for the pilot program. What will those mentors be doing and will students in participating schools have access to their expertise?

**Robyn (Guest)**

Yeah we're really excited to have the mentors join us this week. They will be supporting all of the pilot schools and they'll be attached to specific schools in the pilot. So students and staff and parents and caregivers will get to know the SBAT mentors really well. They're there to support students who are interested in undertaking an SBAT so in that planning phase but also to support students through the two years of their apprenticeship or traineeship while they're at school so they they'll help them with ensuring that they have a flexible timetable that they're able to travel to their place of employment as well as to their place of training so it's really supporting them in making it all possible but also for students interested they're also going to be out there in the community brokering employment opportunities for those those students at the schools.

**Jazmine (Host)**

What are some of the challenges associated with encouraging kids to see different career pathways?

**Robyn (Guest)**

Look I think it's a sense of there's a lot of information out there so it's a little bit of information overload and where do you go to find you know the actual course or occupation or industry that might suit you so a lot of it is about knowing where to find the information and talking to people, so I encourage students to talk to their parents talk to their careers advisors, their teachers, their friends but also other students that may be at their school who are undertaking a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship so it really is about gathering information to ensure that you're making the best decision for you but also knowing yourself, you know. Knowing what you're good at what your interests are and what you might like to pursue post school. So there are some really good tools to do that and as part of the EPPP there are some digital tools available to students. A one called life launcher which is based around an app so they can do it on their phone and that will tell them if they go through a series of different questions and activities what sort of you know interesting skills that they have that match particular occupations that they might not have considered before.

**Jazmine (Host)**

Wow that's amazing and what do parents feel about this program?

**Robyn (Guest)**

The parents at the pilot schools are really engaged they're very supportive and interested in what it might do for their children in relation to providing them with more opportunities around thinking about career pathways that they might not have explored if they hadn't been part of this pilot.

**Jazmine (Host)**

Because some kids actually watching this might not be that engaged with traditional education in what ways do you think that SBAT helps those students?

**Robyn (Guest)**

What it does is it takes them out of I guess the traditional learning in the classroom and into the world of work which is totally different and I think it gives them a different idea of what learning could look like for them so it doesn't necessarily have to be in a classroom environment, we learn in different ways and it gives those students opportunities to learn in those different ways and to actually experience success.

**Jazmine (Host)**

Do you have any advice for students who are weighing up their options?

**Robyn (Guest)**

I would definitely say why not do an SBAT, it's a great pathway. It certainly puts you a head start to a lot of other students that haven't considered what that pathway might be while they're still at school and it also gives you the opportunity to rule things in and out. So you may start an SBAT about in a particular area but realize that maybe it's not for you and pursue something that you feel might be better suited and you've made that decision while you're still at school.

**Jazmine (Host)**

Thanks so much for joining me Robin.

**Robyn (Guest)**

Pleasure.

**Jazmine (Host)**

Over the past few years we've heard a lot about the subject of women and work. The gender pay gap has become a feast for the media and the Me Too movement has received lots of attention as well and rightly so. What we haven't heard a lot about is how women are starting to turn to trades. Joining us now is Fi Shewring. A woman who knows a thing or two about a subject.

Hi Fi thanks for taking the time to talk to us here at EPPPTV I can't wait to hear about the work you're doing to encourage more women to explore careers in trade. But first I would love to hear all about your epic trip across the U.S. What was that all about?

**Fi (Guest)**

Well I decided I'd, I'd written papers and I'd sent them out all over Australia suggesting that women could go into the trades and nothing happened. It was a kind of that's nice. And so I decided I had to do some more research to work out how I could change things and I won an award which was an International Women's Day award and I went to, with this award I designed my own research trip, went across to America landed in Atlanta where my brother lives and first learned how to drive in America because that was a challenge. And then started meeting up with people from the trades and working out what they had in America. They had lots of different pathways for women to go into the trades in America because they've been trying to get women into the trades for many many years but there was still something lacking in that and also what was working in it in America wasn't necessarily going to work in Australia but it was still worth my while looking at everything that they did and so I went to lots of different programs spoke to lots of different people went from Atlanta across to LA went from LA up to Portland and then to Seattle and spoke to anybody I could find that would stand still long enough for me to talk to them.

**Jazmine (Host)**

And what way did your experience differ in America vs. Australia and what can we learn about that push to see more women pursue trades?

**Fi (Guest)**

Well in America their whole system is different. So what they were doing didn't necessarily relate across to here because our way we run our apprenticeships is different, our society geographics. You know where whereas bigger country as them with a lot less people so everything that we have was quite different and so I had to work out what was going to work here in Australia taking what they had been doing and looking at what they had been doing and seeing what worked and what didn't over there as well.

**Jazmine (Host)**

Okay and can you tell me a little bit about SALT and what are you doing to encourage women to take up trades now?

**Fi (Guest)**

So SALT means supporting and linking tradeswomen but right from the beginning we've included everyone. So we've got lots of different members from people that are in the trades to people that aren't as well and people that are looking to go into the trades and what we do is we try and show women in particular but anyone that comes to us that they can actually go into the trades by teaching them how to use tools. So we created a very unique perspective on teaching people hands-on by going to the communities, to schools, to high schools, to primary schools.

We've taught people from the ages of 2 right up to the ages of 96 how to use tools and it's the actual practical aspect of getting them hands-on with tools and we see this incredible lightning moment where they go 'I can do this'. And I go 'yes you can and this is how you do it'. So our workshop is actually our mobile workshop is actually unique in the world and we've traveled four hundred and forty thousand kms around Australia and it's watched internationally as well, by other organizations because what we're doing in Australia is completely unique.

**Jazmine (Host)**

So are you seeing a dramatic increase in women that are wanting to learn trades now?

**Fi (Guest)**

We are in sectors yes. We've been working with some organisations who are changing their workplace their apprenticeship intakes from less than 2% up to 18% in the space of two years. That's very fast radical change. Other areas are a little bit slower so but we've got some fantastic organizations that are really leading the way in showing what's possible.

**Jazmine (Host)**

So is it fair to say that there is a long way to go when it comes to changing people's perceptions around the trades?

**Fi (Guest)**

Well I would have said yes two years ago but having seen the way these companies have shifted and we've helped them like they've come to us for advice and we've given them advice and then they've taken that on board and really you know worked with that. I would say actually I think it's going to happen a lot faster than people think.

**Jazmine (Host)**

And what would you say as a woman that has worked in various trades and what would you say to someone that's looking at pursuing a career in, in a trade?

**Fi (Guest)**

This is why we're encouraging people because it is a fantastic career. I've earned more money as a tradie than anything else I've done and I've had quite a few different jobs and been in different careers and I've I've gone from one trade to another trade you know people laughed at me when at 58 I said I was going to train as a carpenter but I've done it and I've succeeded. So you're never too old and anything if you're feel strongly enough about something and you're passionate about it and you put the work in you can achieve so much and the careers are incredible so you can actually earn a huge amount of money in the trades and you're always wanted. So you know jobs are available and people are waiting to employ women in trades.

**Jazmine (Host)**

That's really exciting. Thank you so much for joining us Fi.

**Fi (Guest)**

Pleasure.

**Jazmine (Host)**

Well that's it for the first episode of a EPPPTV I hope you got something out of it and that it got you thinking about what you might like to do after school. Deciding what you want to do in life isn't always easy especially if you're interested in a few different things. The good news is that there's plenty of options out there for students who want to pursue a vocational career pathway. In our next episode we'll be talking about our partnership with the Master Builders Association and lots more. See you next time.