

Feedback from the 2023 Winter RYPEN, held in June 2023

The Winter RYPEN committee would like to sincerely thank the 31 clubs who supported this life changing experience by sponsoring our 61 participants who attended Blue Gum Lodge in Springwood from Friday 16th to Sunday 18th June. We have received phenomenal feedback from clubs, participants and parents alike, here is a sample of what we have received - check out our Facebook page for all our feedback - <https://www.facebook.com/RID9685winterypen>

Parent feedback:

We are still buzzing from the most amazing experience on the weekend.

I think that you and your team are extraordinary and what you are all doing for our kids is life changing.

*It was a weekend *participant* will always remember, full of experiences and learnings he can draw on for life. He came home excited about his potential, invigorated and full of positive energy that could only be achieved through a great program and a feeling of strong support from mentors and peers.*

For a parent to witness this of their child that has been struggling with mental health is the best gift, and I am so grateful to you all.

*Special thanks to Winnie and Dom who were the two mentors I spoke to at graduation. I know *participant* has so much love and respect for them – he was so lucky to have these two beautiful humans as his “green team/family” leaders. Many thanks (although I feel words are not enough), for everything to you and your team prepared and accomplished, for all your hard work, love for our kids, and your dedication.*

Participants feedback:

Hey RYPEN team!

I just wanted to say a massive thank you for giving me such a amazing experience. When I was initially told that RYPEN would be life changing I had my doubts, but I now am truly grateful and do feel it was life changing. I feel so much gratitude and love for the RYPEN volunteers, mentors, and mentees. I have made such strong connections with so many amazing humans over such a short time. I honestly feel so much more myself - just like camp mum said - as well as so much more confident in myself and my abilities. I do believe the camp has made be a better leader and just a better human being in general. A special thank you to camp mum as well as my wonderful mentors Dave and Shelz it was so wonderful to be able to share my aspirations and have an adult listen to me. Thank you sincerely. When I'm old enough I would love the chance to come back as a mentor and inspire and help others like my mentors did to me. Thank you again.

Feedback from sponsor club:

One of our participants said it was the highlight of her year, and she only went because her grandparents asked her to!

If you sponsored a participant, please be sure to invite them back to your club so you can hear first-hand the impact the experience has had on them - if you need contact details, please do not hesitate to reach out and let me know. We have now confirmed dates for our 2024 camp - 14th-16th June 2024, start thinking of who you can send now. There will be a small price increase to \$350 per participant, keep an eye on the Facebook page for details as we get closer <https://www.facebook.com/RID9685winterypen>. Applications will open in February 2024 and close in May.

Thanks to everyone who made this program come to life, our 17 mentors, camp mum and dad, district support and of course our DG Mina who made not one but two visits to the camp over the weekend, to welcome and farewell the participants - we changed the lives of 61 amazing young humans.

Yours in Rotary,

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