

SBAT pathways: The SBAT family : Insights from a student and their parent on the SBAT journey

Robbie (00:02):

If you don't have the commitment to try and find, make it happen for yourself, it's not going to happen. You've got to put in the hard yards before you started. Once you find one [inaudible]

Anne Cazar - Host (00:13):

Today we're interviewing Robbie sparks a year 11 student who is studying carpentry as a school based apprentice, as part of his HSC. We're also joined by Kim, his mum to give the parents view on school-based apprenticeships and trainings. So what are her thoughts and her recommendations as well to parents and to other people who are considering a school-based apprenticeship. Thanks very much for joining us on the podcast. I just Wanted to start Robbie. I was wonder if you could tell us a little bit about yourself and what you're actually doing with your school-based apprentice?

Robbie (00:50):

Um, Robbie, Spencer from Matraville in Sydney. I'm doing a first year carpentry apprenticeship through school.

Anne Cazar - Host (00:57):

Okay. And so your, what year are you currently in Robbie?

Robbie (01:01):

I'm currently in 11. I'm about to go into year 12.

Anne Cazar - Host (01:04):

So you started the apprenticeship in year 11 or was it an earlier

Robbie (01:08):

One? Yeah, so the apprenticeship were gone at the sod of year 11. So we signed up the apprenticeship. I think it might've been the first or second week of school this year and we started working after that.

Anne Cazar - Host (01:17):

Okay, fantastic. Um, and so you would continue it in your year 12. Is that your yeah,

Robbie (01:23):

So we do the TAFE work this, so I did my first year TAFE. So I did one day work this year and one day TAFE and then next year changes over into two days of work and notes. So when I finished year 12, I'll come out with my first year apprenticeship done.

Anne Cazar - Host (01:35):

Okay. That's fantastic. So can you talk to me a little bit about Robbie, um, about how you actually got into, um, making that decision to do a, an apprentice carpentry course while you're doing your HSC?

Robbie (01:48):

To be honest, I didn't even really think about doing a trade until probably halfway through last year. I originally wanted to do physiotherapy, but I realized the marks were a bit high and I didn't really like

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school that much. So I just, I got work experience with some of the guys I knew from football and I liked it and tried to find work in Carpentry.

Anne Cazar - Host (02:07):

So, first of all, what subjects are you actually studying for your HSA for each role

Robbie (02:15):

At the moment I'm doing English studies, timber, maths, and sports coaching.

Anne Cazar - Host (02:22):

Well, did you have another subject, um, in your 11 or have you dropped or how are you picking, can you talk to me about that

Robbie (02:30):

With the beginning of the Evergen with, for year 11, it started with six subjects, but with the apprenticeship, it allows you to drop two subjects. So you only have to do four classes at school. So we started with six and we dropped down to four, which freed me up more time to have my study and work out what I'm doing at school. And also give me more time for work as well. So the school careers advisor was helping me try to find work and we're looking around. We couldn't really seem to find anything we liked, but one of my, one of my friends was also at another school, was looking for an apprenticeship as well. So we were both looking together and we found one of the guys that his dad knew it was looking for an apprentice at the time. And we spoke to him and he seemed keen to have me on. So I just ended up working with him.

Anne Cazar - Host (03:14):

Okay. So just, um, talking about your one day a week at the training, will the tape, do you go in for that or do they come out for you? Or how does that work?

Robbie (03:26):

So I go to Thai for Congress. So we go out there because there's only just me doing an apprenticeship at school. There's no one else doing it. So I have to go out to TAFE, which is fun. It's, I'm enjoying it. It's better than school.

Anne Cazar - Host (03:40):

Well, they all say that. I will say it's better than so when you're actually at your tape, when you're doing the training, who do ask those in your class, are you there by yourself or what's who else is there?

Robbie (03:53):

No, it's may and probably I think 15 or 16 other guys. So there's me another school-based boy. And the rest of them are all first-year apprentices.

Anne Cazar - Host (04:02):

Okay. So it's a mixture. So it's not a separate class for school-based apprentices that you're in with all the other apprentices doing exactly the same training and stuff.

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Robbie (04:11):

No, it's just, it's just some mix of all of us, which is better, but I think it'd be better. It's a more wider variety of people

Anne Cazar - Host (04:20):

And with industry and you're already starting it. Can I ask Robbie, um, do you do any other work for them or can you work or do you only work during the school or the school hours? Or do you have to work during holidays? Or how does that all work?

Robbie (04:36):

He, uh, worked my one day during the week. And if there's more like extra work on a Saturday where he's going to need more sets of hands, like he'll ask me to come in, but it's not like a forced thing, but I try to work as much as I can during school holidays, just so I can get some money and have something to do. So I'm not sitting around at home or just sitting at the beach, but also there's a certain amount of workdays you have to do for your apprenticeship for the two years. So I try to get my work days up, so I don't have to worry about it next year.

Anne Cazar - Host (05:00):

Right. And so that's how many hours is that? Or how many days?

Robbie (05:04):

I think it's 143 days over the two years. I think

Anne Cazar - Host (05:09):

You actually get paid for the work that you do. So you don't just get a set wage one day a week. If you go in and do some additional hours, they actually pay you for those, those words.

Robbie (05:18):

Yeah. So however long I'm there. So say I did one and a half days. I'll get paid for the one and a half days, like the hour, right. So it'd be the eight hours and then the four hours for the next half day. So you get paid for however long.

Anne Cazar - Host (05:29):

So I came, um, as Robbie's mum, um, how, when, how did it come about from your point of view? Did you just Robbie come home and say something to you? Or had you been saying, Robbie look at school-based apprenticeships. What did you know about them? Um,

Kim (05:46):

He came home from school one day and he just sort of said, uh, I think I'm not trying doing an apprenticeship. And I was like, oh, okay. Is this is a bit new because you know, he wanted to do physio therapy. So it was a bit, bit of a different, different thing, what he wanted to do, the carpentry, carpentry and therapy, two totally different things. There was sort of a bit of a shock. And I was like, ah, well, you know, if you start it, you have to finish the whole four years off and do what you have to do. It's like, yeah, yeah, yeah, no worries. And then we looked into it more with Meredith, um, you know,

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had to find someone for him to go with and all that. So, yeah. Um, you know, as long as he's out there doing what he's supposed to be doing, we're all good for it.

Anne Cazar - Host (06:33):

Fantastic. Had you heard about the concept of vocational education in schools or the sec in secondary schools or school based apprenticeships before Robbins talking to you?

Kim (06:44):

When, when Rami was in year 10 at the end of year 10, the school had a, um, a night on where you could come and listen to, um, some things, um, about TAFE and all that sort of stuff. And I didn't really think too much of it when they were saying it because, um, it wasn't what he wanted to do. And it just sort of all came around and, you know, everything just sort of fell into place, you know, with Meredith was on, on top of everything. And, um, it just worked out and Robbie says really happy. Like, you know, he's happy to go to work. He's happy to go to TAFE. It's nice for any fits in at, at TAFE with older people and all that sort of stuff. So it's just really, really worked out really well.

Anne Cazar - Host (07:33):

So talk to me about that concept that originally you had been thinking about doing, um, physio-therapy Robbie. So I'm assuming that was, um, where you envisage that going straight into a university pathway. Is that, was that your original thoughts?

Robbie (07:48):

I was just going to say, well, from my head, just say what marks got and what I could do. I was either thinking about physiotherapy or sports sides, something to do something to do with the field of sport, really, because that's what I really like in my sport, my football. So I was going to get, see if I could go that pathway. So if my thing football doesn't work out or have an injury, it's just going to lead me to not be able to play anymore and still have something to do with the sport is what I was thinking.

Anne Cazar - Host (08:11):

Was it just an automatic assumption that you go to high school, you do your agency, then you go into uni. Was that just what you thought happened or?

Robbie (08:22):

Um, not really. That's just, well, I thought would probably be the best thing for me, but it was to go to university, do my degree for sports science or whatever I was going to do and just try and work that way, because I heard there was a lot of money in it and it seemed like I would enjoy it. It was like the food, the physios from football and stuff always seem they're enjoying to do it and stuff like that. They're just seem to be interesting to me the time.

Anne Cazar - Host (08:43):

Have you done any investigation in regards to salaries or career paths for carpentry and in that field? Yeah,

Robbie (08:51):

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I have the money. It just seems the better you get at the job and the more experience you have in it just seems to get better and better. And if you're good at what you do, the money is endless. The supply for you and the Nate, Nate for you is there, you can get whatever you want really for your job.

Anne Cazar - Host (09:07):

Kim, just asking you about that question. Was it automatically assumption that you, that Robin was going to go into school and then when you finish your school, he goes to university. Was that what your train of thought was?

Kim (09:18):

Yeah, it was, it was the most thought that Robbie would go on to, um, university. But, um, as you know, you have to be happy in the job that you want to do for the rest of your life. He does play a lot of sports, so it just sort of went hand in hand and he's, he's mind changed on some other things and he liked his Timberworks at school and all that sort of stuff. So that, that was, um, probably a positive frame to look for something else. Um, until he did the work experience with the couple of people, he didn't really like getting his hands too dirty, but now, um, same, same to love it. Um, so yeah, he's happy. So that's the main thing

Anne Cazar - Host (10:07):

In hindsight, you know, just, what would you say to parents, um, who are probably at that stage at the moment, Kim, you know, in regards to, you know, they're going to subject selection, they're going to that component, what sort of advice or, you know, what, what sort of information would you, would you probably be suggesting?

Kim (10:26):

Um, I think it's, uh, the, the programs fantastic program. And I think it's really, really good because when he's off the, um, Wednesday, when he's working on the Friday, when he's at TAFE, the classes still go on, so he still has to catch up on the work that he's missed out on those days for school. So you've got the kids have to have a good relationship with their teachers to be able to get that work and, you know, to be able to talk to them. And if any, anything, um, you know, then they think they're missing out on anything at school.

Anne Cazar - Host (11:03):

Robin coming back to yourself. I want to ask that question. Did you find that the relationship between yourself and your, um, your teachers at school changed between say the year seven to 10 through winter year 11 and 12, especially in them knowing that you were doing an apprenticeship?

Robbie (11:20):

Yeah, dude, I need a lot more reliance on the teacher. So when I'm away, they're still having the work there for me so I can come and get it when I do come back to school and there's I find missing out on anything, they let me know so I can catch up on it and I'm not left in the dark and don't know what's going on in a full round.

Anne Cazar - Host (11:38):

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Is that just, um, email or text messaging or do you just catch up the next day or how does it, how does that actually work?

Robbie (11:46):

Is this like the upload work to Google classroom? So on the computer and I get a notification if they're posting any work, which you sent to my phone. So if I'm not here, I still know that it's there and I can check up on it later in the day, say what it is, find out whether I need to go talk to the teacher about it. If, if I'm what I'm missing out on is important. Or if I need to go find out what to do or how to do it, I can go talk to them about it. And they'll be fine with it.

Anne Cazar - Host (12:11):

One of the things I want to ask you in regards to that Robi, and which is obviously a concern to everybody is, so you got to school like to do your year 11 and year 12, three days a week, and then you're at TAFE and then you're at work. And in year 12, you won't have to go to type anymore because you've already done. What's referred to as the theoretical or the training requirements for the first year. Can you talk to me a little bit about how that all works

Robbie (12:39):

As just Mike, Tom for what I've got to do? If it's going to take me, I can't go out on the weekend or I can't go do something with the family and I have to do my schoolwork. Like it has to be done. It's what's important and needs to be done. And if I'm not at school, I'm at football or work, there's not really much social life there, but it is what it is. That's what I want to do. So I just make it

Anne Cazar - Host (13:01):

Dude been busy too. That's very much different than anybody. Who's actually not doing an apprenticeship because there'll be just doing the assignment, Mehta schoolwork, the same assessments, um, also trying to manage their sports and their, and their social life. Would that be correct?

Robbie (13:15):

Not really. I have a little bit more, have more free periods. So with the apprenticeship, the work and the TAFE takes up two class slot. So I only have to do four classes while I'm at school. So I have more free periods to work on all my schoolwork and stuff like that, but I still have similar amount of homework and on that aspect and I just have to catch up on it when I'm not here.

Anne Cazar - Host (13:35):

So can I ask you about what happens during exam time? Robbie? So I've been, you've done your 11 and you're now entering into year 12. Congratulations. So how does that happen with your TAFE and your work? If your stomach got your year 11 exams, how does that work? Do you, can you talk me through that? What

Robbie (13:54):

Way did so I had, when we did our exams always wasn't that long ago I had an English exam that I had worked on the same day and I spoke to the school and I said, oh, I can swap my work day or something. So I don't have an exam and I can come sit the exam and said, oh no, it's okay. They'll let me go to work.

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And the exam just got moved to a day where I could come in and do it. So I sat the exam in the morning and then sat another one in the afternoon and I'll fall fallen.

Anne Cazar - Host (14:16):

It sounds like it, they are understanding of the fact that you are doing a school based apprentice.

Robbie (14:21):

Yeah. Majority of the teachers are supportive of what I'm doing now at the beginning, I think they were a little bit skeptical of what, what I was doing, but once they've caught up with what I'm doing, how it works and all that sort of stuff, they just push me along, make sure I'm doing everything I need to do and make sure I'm doing, getting the work done.

Anne Cazar - Host (14:38):

I do want to ask you Robin, what is your intentions after year 12 when you finish, are you thinking of staying in the apprenticeship for carpentry or what are your thoughts?

Robbie (14:47):

Yeah, I do want to, I do want to stick with it because it's something I enjoy really enjoying and honestly how I can go in the business and see how my career can progress in it.

Anne Cazar - Host (14:56):

So what are the options, um, you know, in regards to the careers with carpentry, have you had a bit of an exploration about what the career paths are or what you can do or where you can go?

Robbie (15:07):

Yeah, I've looked around and talking with the guys at tire, like you can get your own business in carpentry where you can go out and work for other people and sub contracts for them, or you can get your ability to, with your carpentry course. So you can sit your building building course. So your certificate for, for construction and you can get your pudding license and get your own business through that way as well.

Anne Cazar - Host (15:26):

Yeah. Is that, that sounds to me pretty exciting. Is that something that you're, um, that, that excites you? That idea or,

Robbie (15:32):

Yeah, it's something I'm pretty keen on. I like the idea that you can work for yourself and you have your own hours the whole time.

Anne Cazar - Host (15:39):

Kim, if I could just go back to yourself for a moment. So now that you've seen this process going on, um, have any other parents, or was anybody came up and spoke to you about saying, oh, I've heard that Robin's doing this. Have you had anybody started making any conversations or approaches to you? Okay.

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Kim (15:57):

Um, quite a few parents ask me how it works and you know, what happens and where do they have to go and all those sorts of things. And, um, yeah, so there, there is quite a few parents out there there's not too much, you know, there wasn't too much information that we were given in the beginning. So it was all a bit trial and error for us in the beginning, but you know, everything works fine now, but yeah, there is a lot of, a lot of parents out there that are interested in how it all works.

Anne Cazar - Host (16:26):

So I came on just, um, I'm just curious about what sort of information now you were saying that, um, parents are now coming to you. What has been your advice or what have you been saying when parents come up to you and say, you know, how does it all work in everything?

Kim (16:42):

Uh, someone asked me how, how it all goes. It's I think it's one of the best things that's ever really happened. Um, just to say, you know, um, Robbie so happy and, you know, he's happy to go to school and you say these other kids that are not so happy to go to school, um, when he's on, he has to go three days a week. It's a lot better. Um, but yeah.

Anne Cazar - Host (17:06):

And so in hindsight, what do you think, um, what other information, or what other advice do you think could be given to people in year 10? Or what else do you think that, um, parents need to know about?

Kim (17:19):

And parents are scared of what what's going to happen? You know, um, we just started robbing in the beginning that if he was choosing to do this, that he'd had to say the whole four years out. So you start the apprenticeship. You have to say the whole time out. Obviously the first year is done over two years, year 11 and year 12, and then he does the rest outside of school. Um, so we told him that once, once he made his mind up on what he wanted to do, um, he had to finish, finish it and say it out, um, were very supportive in what, what, um, he wants to do. So he's a big boy and had to, has to do that. And it was just lucky that, um, he's actually really enjoying it.

Anne Cazar - Host (18:05):

In hindsight, if you hadn't actually done this school-based apprenticeship and you had just been doing the regular school programs, how do you think that this would be working out for you? Um, at this time?

Robbie (18:17):

Uh, probably just be a lot more like just doing my schoolwork sort of thing, and just getting along with school, getting through it and getting that finished off and get out of here. But it's more or less, I don't know if I would have still ended up in a trade, but at the end of my schooling, but happy I did it now. And I made the decision to get into my trade.

Anne Cazar - Host (18:35):

Ask the question about your friends. How did they feel about you doing this apprenticeship? You know, what are they saying about it?

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Robbie (18:43):

To be honest, that a little bit jealous that I get to go out and you have to come to school three days a week and I'm going to work and I'm getting paid and all this sort of stuff. Like a lot of them a bit kicking themselves because they didn't start one and they wanted to do it, but they just didn't know how it worked and didn't ask about it. And if they would have asked about it, they would have been in the same situation. I am now enjoying

Anne Cazar - Host (19:04):

It. You're saying, and that's by sort of what I'm hearing. That is the idea that the, you have to actually make the steps yourself. It's not going to happen. If you just sit back and say, well, you organize it. It sounds to me that you were really proactive and you made that decision to say, well, this is something I want to do. The person who's interested in that has to keep making those steps to, to want to be part of it.

Robbie (19:26):

Yeah. So you got to chase it up. Like the school can't do everything for you. You can let the school know that you're interested in it and they can do everything they can do to help you find work. But if you don't, if you don't have the commitment to try and find work and make it happen for yourself, it's not going to happen. You've got to just put in the hard yards before you started monthly farm work. You'll be sharing.

Anne Cazar - Host (19:48):

It sounds to me that you've got an ideal life at the moment, Robin, which is just fantastic. You go to school. When are the three days, which is enough for you, you've got money coming in from your work. You're working on your career path. You're already starting to do learning a new trade and get a qualification. That's going to assist you once you've finished your, your school. And you've already started to work out where you're going. Plus on top of that, you still sound to have a social life, very similar to what is happening to most year 11 and year 12, especially. And you, but you can also still maintain the things like your sports and everything like that. So it sounds to me that you're actually in a really good space at the moment.

Robbie (20:28):

Yeah. So I lost, I'm pretty good at the moment. I've got every, everything I'd want and need. There's not really too much other than missing out on compared to everyone else. I get to do what I want to do the majority of the time and still find time to get everything in to my day that I need to do

Anne Cazar - Host (20:47):

Yourself. What would be your advice?

Kim (20:49):

I would recommend it if, if your child's at school and not enjoying themselves 100%, I just find that it's the best way to go around it. So they're still at school because obviously there's not old enough to leave school as yet. And, um, to finish year 12 and have their first year apprenticeship already over and done with, and to go into their second year after finishing school, not only is the money better, um, you know, th they've found something that they actually want to do. Um, Robbie Robbie is one of three, three boys

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and he's, um, younger brother is in year 10 at the moment and looking at, um, a school based apprenticeship for next year.

Anne Cazar - Host (21:39):

Right. And your third child, where are they? [inaudible]

Kim (21:47):

Never too young. Never too young. Yeah.

Anne Cazar - Host (21:50):

You met Scott at your school, go to person for parents who want to know about school-based apprentices because, you know, um, I think once you start on the journey, it's almost like a no brainer,

Kim (22:03):

Is it? Yeah. Yeah. And, you know, sit it, sitting there in the hall that night when they were talking about, um, school-based apprenticeships and sort of just went in one ear and out the other, but it wasn't anything that I really thought of because it wasn't what he wanted to do. And, um, it wasn't until after that we had to come and speak to some teachers about, so yeah, I just recommend it. I think it's the best thing that anyone can do. It's really good. Love, love the idea of it. When

Anne Cazar - Host (22:33):

You realize that Robbie didn't look like he was going on to university, how did that make you feel?

Kim (22:39):

I was fine with it, um, supportive in what, what they want to do. You have to enjoy doing what you're doing. And, um, he was, you know, proactive about everything and finding out what, um, came with the job and all that sort of stuff. And, you know, organize these, um, couple of weeks of training with a couple of different people to find out whether he was going to like it. Right. Um, so yeah, a bit of work experience, you know, to help out where he was going to go with his life. And, um, yeah, he's just, he's just supported in whatever he wants to do. You know, he plays football, he plays rugby league and, um, you know, he's got lots of training three times a week and games on weekends and he's got lots of things on and you know, his is supportive of, um, you know, if he has to leave a little bit early to get to football training and stuff like that. So it helps having a good boss and it helps having a good relationship with, um, and it helps having a good relationship with the school as well. So that can help you out with things.

Anne Cazar - Host (23:43):

So Robbie, can I just ask you in regards to your workplace, how was it different than being at school?

Robbie (23:49):

Um, there's a lot less PayPal. They at the workplace and what we have at school, but also it's just a more mature environment as well. There's also a lot more going on with all different things and you're always learning something new as well at school, we'd be on the same topic for like a couple of weeks. Like in math, you do the same thing for a few days in a row, but like at work every day, every day is different,

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new tasks, new challenges, new things to overcome, just what, that's, what I enjoy about it. You're always learning.

Anne Cazar - Host (24:19):

So Robin Kim, thank you so much for your time and your insights. Robbie. I wish you all the best in your year 12 and in your apprenticeship, it sounds exciting. And it sounds like you've fallen on your feet and you really have got that synergy and that balance between school work, career paths, congratulations Kim on raising and being part of Robbie's life, because it sounds like, um, your support and your guidance has been really important to it. So all the best. And thank you very much. And you've got to let us know how you went. No worries. Thanks. Thanks very much. [inaudible]

Anne Cazar - Host (25:00):

So thanks everybody for joining us for that towns. I hope you enjoy it. If you'd like some more information you could go to the website [S bed in new south wales.info](http://Sbedinnewsouthwales.info) or search for the department of education, new south Wales school-based apprenticeship programs. And until I see you again,

Speaker 5 (25:19):

Take care, [inaudible].