

## Meet the Stawell ELEVATE Team

### An interview with Kylie Hunter – Assistant Schools Team Leader

**Directors:** Sharon & Gary Parkinson.

Sharon and Gary have 2 children, Daniel (8) and Moriah (3), plus Harry (16) a Chinese exchange student living with them for the next 3 years. Gary is the full time cleaner at the school. Sharon does a variety of volunteer work, is undertaking a Cert 4 in Theology and Ministry, as well as being a mum! - Sharon & Gary also support the work of the School Chaplain as members of the school Chaplaincy Committee.

Link to Stawell Secondary School: <http://www.stawellsc.vic.edu.au/index.htm>



### *Tell us about Stawell Secondary College and Elevate.*

Stawell is approximately 230 kilometers West-North-West of Melbourne in rural central Victoria. Stawell Secondary College has just over 500 students and has a growing international students program.



The Principal and staff have been very supportive of ELEVATE, which began in August last year.

We have started *Connecting In* with students during lunchtime, visiting classes, and generally getting to know the school community.

Our plans for this year include:

- Running games and activities during lunchtimes, as well as having some youth issues focused sessions.
- Offering one-on-one student mentoring for students struggling to keep up or fit in at school.

- Providing opportunities for students to get involved in *Community Action* through the local Mens Shed, and BlueLight events



### *What do you hope to achieve in the school through your involvement?*

At the moment our focus is on becoming part of the life of the school and building good relationships with students and teachers, as well as with parents. We want our school community to know who we are and what we are about, sharing the good news of the Gospel as our relationships with those in the school open up and develop.



### *What have been some of your struggles?*

We are currently building our team, which is hard work. This year we are fortunate to have Shiela, a member of our Church join us, and we continue to put the word out for new team members. We also find that lunchtime is such a short amount of time to be able to engage with students. We are looking for ways to make the most of that time.



### *What have been some of your successes?*

The embracing of ELEVATE by the school staff and School Council has been a great encouragement. They have been so welcoming, even allowing us into classrooms during class time. We have also found the curiosity of students encouraging. They will often come up to us and ask “who are you?”, “what do you do?” We can see God at work and we are confident He has much in store for the future of Stawell ELEVATE.