

MEDIA RELEASE



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Guaranteed good vibes at giant garage sale

It is shopping that makes you feel good according to the organisers of this Saturday's bumper garage sale at Toowoomba boutique op shop, Collectables.

"In fact, we guarantee that every person who comes along to our garage sale will leave feeling great, knowing their purchase is supporting a good cause," said Penny Hamilton, chief executive officer of YellowBridge QLD which runs the social enterprise op shop.

Twice a year, the enterprise opens its back doors for a one-day garage sale with hundreds of items from just one dollar.

All the proceeds help keep the shop doors open for the rest of the year so it can provide work and training opportunities for people with a disability.

"This is our first social enterprise so we have been on a steep learning curve since we opened our doors 18 months ago," Ms Hamilton said.

"We knew that running a retail store, even a not-for-profit one, was no easy task but we believe so strongly in the underlining purpose – helping people with a disability," she said.

"The Toowoomba community has been phenomenal. They've embraced our little shop and the reason we exist.

"We have been so humbled by their generosity and support, from donating items that we then sell in store to being one of our treasured customers."

Customers are greeted by trainees who are supported by a YellowBridge disability support worker for the duration of their work shift.

They learn a range of practical retail skills including customer service, operating the cash till and bank card machine, researching and pricing stock, preparing stock displays and working as a team.

"People with a disability are often very keen to work but can struggle to find a job," Ms Hamilton said.

"Collectables not only helps them learn new skills that are practical and useful, it also makes a huge difference to their self-esteem."

"They love coming to Collectables and it makes them feel happy and part of the community. To see them learning, smiling and laughing is the ultimate reward."

Ms Hamilton said their goal was to generate enough income from shop sales so they could offer trainees a paid position.

"That is our ultimate goal but we need more people to donate or shop in our store to help us get there," she said.

"The community has been terrific and we hope more people will hear about our cause and choose to support our little shop."

The Collectables garage sale is on Saturday 24 February from 8am – 1pm at 2 Station Street.

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