

“ **VET offers a taste for something  
and it’s okay to try it  
and see where you want to go.  
It’s a building block  
and a foundation for any  
future study or career.** ”

## **Toniele Williams’ journey**

- Today** Social worker specialising in foster and kinship care  
- Graduate Certificate in Domestic and Family Violence
- 2010-14** Bachelor degree Social Work with a minor in Mental Health  
at University of Queensland
- 2009-10** Volunteer - Certificate IV in Youth Work
- 2006-09** Worked as a secretary in a law firm
- 2006** Graduated high school



**Today I am team leader for a non-government community foster and kinship care provider. I think I was always destined for this job, but how did I get here?**

## **Toniele's story**

I did quite well in my studies at school, but Year 12 threw me.

There was a lot of pressure to go to Uni, but I couldn't understand why I had to make one decision which would affect my whole life when I was 17.

I couldn't work out where my passion lay and nothing sat right.

In the end I didn't put in an application for Uni and I went to work as a legal secretary. I got a lot of questioning about my decision at the time.

I eventually left my job to volunteer full-time with the Salvation Army. I saw a real need in my local community for a youth worker. There were children sleeping in the playground at school and I started offering help through my church, and helped obtain government funding to establish a local youth service.

I was really passionate about this work and that was when I realised that I should probably study this, so I did a Certificate IV in Youth Work.

That and my volunteer work made me realise it was the right choice.

It was definitely what I wanted to do as a career.

**The next year I went on to a degree in Social Work at the University of Queensland and then my Graduate Certificate in Domestic and Family Violence.**

**“VET really helped me decide what I wanted to do. In my work one of the strongest messages I give people is that VET offers you a taste for something and it's okay to try it and see where you want to go.”**