**MIKAYLA TRANSCRIPT – ARMADALE ART STORIES**

**MIKAYLA**: Hi, my name is Mikayla McCarthy and I'm 14 years old and I go to Armadale Senior High School. I actually have a lot of different personalities. I can be crazy, annoying, hyperactive, sometimes rude, and just, you know, me.

Well, I only live with my dad, I don't live with my mum. I think it's because he's a dad and he's got three daughters, and he's overprotective. He does like listening to music, but it's more country. He did do drawing, so I think I might have got it from him, but I don’t know because most of my family from what I know of do art.

The youngest one screams too much, yells, gets me in trouble too much, and I always get blamed for it and I'm the one getting in trouble, but it's her. But anyways, my older sister, she's not here today because she's got work experience and she's working at the primary school canteen. She's helping out in there because she's got a learning disability herself. She struggles to read, write. And you know, I help her. Yeah. When she asked for a word that she doesn't understand, my little sister says, oh you need to learn, you know, stop asking people. And I always tell Willow, because I understand where she's coming from, I used to be like that where I couldn't read and write, but I got better. So, I do kind of feel like I'm meant to be the oldest because I have to be the mature one in the family, but I'm not really, I make more dumb choices than anyone else.

So, my first ever painting was a painting of my granddad's cat, who sadly passed away, but his name was Jimmy. He was a ranga! He was white and ranga. But I thought it was really good when I was painting it. But then, when I look back now, I'm just like, oh... it's not as good as I thought it was going to be; but I've gotten better. I still actually have the painting that I did. It's at home. It’s in a frame. I want to get better at realism, but I just don't really know what to start with when I'm doing it.

Art was my first hobby, but I got into sport. I was pretty good at sport for a while until I stopped. And then it's just now more art, because I want to focus on art knowing I can get further in it. [I was into] basketball, just like any sport. I was good at any sport, running was my main one where I ran a lot.

Smoking. I just got into a bad habit with my friends doing it and then I just stopped. From what dad said, I couldn't do any drugs or anything, but I have. He said not until 18, not until you're over 18, I don't care. But now, no. And I was just like, yeah, it's a bit hard when you're addicted! Actually, a lot of kids do it and I kind of got it from a different friend that ended up moving here, but they ended up moving back to where they were, so they didn't stay for long but they ended up starting it and we thought was so cool in Year 7 doing it, but then it turned into addiction and then, yeah.

I've got a counselor now because I do want to try and get out of it, but I don't know. I'm pretty sure I'm addicted to it so I can't stop. It's just harder for me to run now, but I still have it when I do run and I do feel pretty happy when I run. But I think it was more insecurities when I wanted to run, because of my self; you know, I just didn't feel good about myself, so I just wanted to lose weight, and then when I did lose weight I lost too much, and then it was just a bit hard to keep under control. Mm-Hmm.

I just looked at myself in the mirror, I just didn't feel me, and I just didn't feel like I wanted to be myself, so I wanted to change myself. But I think it was more for other people. I wanted to change myself for other people, not myself.

[Now] I think of the positive things of myself. Like what I do like about myself, so I don't have to change myself. My eyes. Everyone always comments on it. Whenever I speak to all my friends I'll be just speaking and they’ll go, you have the most gorgeous eyes, and they just stop the conversation. They just say that and I'm just like, yeah, I know!

I wanted to be a vet or help in the zoo. Because I'm a person that loves animals and if, you know, an animal dies or something, straight away I'm crying. Even if it's a person, like if someone's hurt or something, I just feel the emotion, wanting to cry for them if they're not. But when I said that to my dad, he kind of got mad because he wants me to do art instead. Yeah, because they know I'm good at it and I kind of push it away when I'm doing other things and I kind of forget that I'm good at it. Then when I do sit there and do it, I do enjoy doing it, but I don't know... I want to do it, I want to be able to teach other people and encourage 'em, because I used to do that to Willow when she was little. I used to try and get her to draw with me, but it never worked out. She used to give up straight away. She starts drawing and she’d say nah, I can't do it, yours looks too good. It was always like that. If mine looked better than theirs they wouldn’t do it with me.

I have been through a lot knowing that I don't have a mum either. And after my dad was stabbed... it was really hard for him because we nearly lost him, and we ended up having to move in with our nan. I'm glad that I'm able to be at school, because if I did lose dad and I was to go to mum’s, I wouldn't be in a school, because she didn't look after us that well. So, knowing that I can read, write, I can do all of the things like a normal kid could; but if I was not with my dad, I don't think I would have to be, I don't think I'll be able to read or write. Yeah, I think that has made us kids become really strong towards each other, but I don't know, we do argue a lot!