

# Confidencers soars for teenagers in cockpit



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EXCITED teenagers gathered at the Wangaratta Airport to get involved in some risky business, despite undesirable weather conditions on Tuesday. The group participated in an inspirational program run by SOAR (Strengthening Opportunities, Achievement, and Respect) Youth Development Inc, which used a hands-on aviation based environment to teach risk management.

SOAR instructor Ian Lilley was involved with the Newcastle program prior to starting the program in Wangaratta.

"It has been running for nine years up in Newcastle and now we've decided to set up a program down here," he said.

"Overall the program is about risk management...we want the kids to be involved with risk because risk can be fun, but within that there are subgroups of perspective, confidence and resilience.

"The three flights they participate in marry with each of



**HIGH HOPES: 'SOAR' instructor Ian Lilley showed participant Kerrrie-Ann Massey-Chase the ropes inside the cockpit.** PHOTO: Emma Hillier

the three different components."

Previous participants from the SOAR program say that the practical approach to learning has had a positive impact on them, and Mr Lilley and his partners from NESAY hope it will have the same effect

here in Wangaratta. "The program has had a very impressive success rate," Mr Lilley said.

"The beauty of it is that we don't just talk about it, we put the kids into a difficult scenario so when they get into an uncomfortable situation in the real world

they can actually put these skills into practice.

"Some kids have enjoyed it and others haven't, we take kids out of their comfort zones but the confidence comes from when they achieve what they didn't realise they could."

The teenagers recruited

by NESAY were encouraged to engage with the community and have the confidence to pursue their potential.

Any young people interested in the program are welcome to contact NESAY on 5720 2201 for further details.

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