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inspire Igniting minds.

EVERY TUESDAY

FROM FAIL TO FAB

Two years ago Sunni Rowe, 17, was failing high school. Today, she's about to launch her own swimwear line. **P22**



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MAKING A FASHION STATEMENT

Sunni Rowe felt let down and disillusioned by the mainstream education system, but TAFE has helped give her designs on a bright future

EMILY SELLECK

SOUTHPORT teen Sunni Rowe is a budding businesswoman getting ready to launch her own swimwear line.

But two years ago, the 17-year-old was failing high school and left home without any

prospects for the future.

"School was really bad for me. I felt like my teachers just saw me as a number," Ms Rowe said.

"It really got my self esteem down, I felt stupid all the time but I knew that I wasn't.

"I left school and came to TAFE where I met my teacher, Leanne, and she turned my life around."

Ms Rowe said there was a stigma surrounding those who opt out of mainstream schools for courses at TAFE.

"Leanne made me want to come to school, I would actually arrive early and leave late," she said.

"TAFE got me cleaned up ... they don't care what you look like, what you wear or if you've made bad choices."

Today, Ms Rowe describes herself as an entrepreneur as she follows in the footsteps of Currumbin-based swimwear brand Tacoola.

"I started reselling clothes online but now I'm saving hard to help get my business off the ground," she said.

"I want to be experimental

with my patterns and designs.

"I feel like every brand on the market right now looks really similar.

"Eventually I want to open a boutique with a little cafe inside so people can shop and get good coffee.

"I work as a barista at a cafe at Chirn Park so I can definitely train everyone up."



Sunni Rowe loves learning at TAFE

Picture: Glenn Hampson