

2022 Outcomes Evaluation Report

A creative learning program promoting student wellbeing and educational engagement through community involvement and child-led social action.



Introduction

This report presents a summative evaluation of the Kids Thrive **'Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts'** in 2022. The program was successfully delivered in three schools this year; Newhaven Primary School, Powlett River Primary School, and Bass Valley Primary School.



Kids as Catalysts is Kids Thrive's award-winning resilience and creative leadership program, which received the **2020 Community Philanthropy Award** from Philanthropy Australia – in partnership with Give Where You Live and Geelong Community Foundations; and the **2017 Vichealth Improving Mental Wellbeing Award** for strengthening connections between children and community groups, and empowering children to become changemakers in their communities.





Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts - 2022 Bass Valley Primary / Newhaven Primary / Powlett River Primary Schools Outcomes Evaluation Report

The Evaluation

This evaluation identifies the impact of the Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts program in Bass Valley Primary School, Newhaven Primary School and Powlett River Primary School in 2022. This pilot was initiated and supported by the Bass Coast Community Foundation.

Project Logic

The evaluation has been guided by a project logic. The project logic is included as Appendix 1 at the end of this document. The project logic makes the thinking that underlies the project explicit and exposes the underlying 'hypothesis' on which the program is based. The purpose of the project logic is to be clear about the activities, outputs and expected outcomes of the project so that the correct evaluation questions are identified.

Evaluation Approach

This evaluation uses a summative approach aimed at determining the impact of the Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts program during 2022. Summative evaluation is a method of judging the worth of a program at the end of the program's activities. The focus is on the outcomes achieved, changes observed in participants, and differences that have been demonstrated.

Evaluation Questions

The following summative evaluation questions have been developed for this evaluation. The questions are based on the project outputs and short-term outcomes:

- 1. To what extent have children, teachers and community members participated in Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts?
- 2. What has Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts delivered?
- 3. To what extent have children demonstrated growth in positive social and emotional skills?
- 4. To what extent have children learnt and applied creative learning skills, improved their educational engagement, and achieved educational outcomes?
- 5. To what extent have children learnt and applied leadership and community engagement skills?

- 6. To what extent has the community had a positive engagement and improved participation with children and the school?
- 7. To what extent have children achieved age-appropriate level or higher across all domains?
- 8. To what extent did students surprise or exceed the expectations of the teacher?
- 9. To what extent have children built their community networks?

These questions form the framework for the presentation of the Evaluation Results in the next section.

Data Collection

Key documents and data sources for this evaluation have included:

- Minutes of meetings with teachers and principal
- Student Progress Reports detailed reports completed by teachers for each child in their class detailing demonstrated changes as a result of Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts
- Personal reflective evaluation activities with students
- Community Partner Surveys
- Teacher and Principal Evaluation interviews and surveys

Data has been analysed using a constructivist approach - based on the understanding that the "truth" of a situation is individually and collectively constructed by the people who experience it. In constructivist evaluation, it is assumed that there are many different ways of interpreting or understanding the intent and impact of an activity and that to understand the activity the evaluator must gather together those understandings from a range of sources. For a constructivist evaluator, the truth of the situation is what the people who experience it describe.

Evaluation Results

In this section, each evaluation question is answered based on an analysis of the data. A summary of the results is provided at the end of this section.

1. To what extent have children, teachers and community members participated in *Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts* in 2022?

Data collected by Kids Thrive indicates that the program directly involved:

- 78 grade 5 and 6 students, including:
 - 2 students who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
 - 1 student with disabilities
 - 1 culturally and linguistically diverse student
- 10 teachers / education support staff
- 3 school Principals
- 4 Kids Thrive Facilitators

- 1 Kids Thrive Community Liaison
- 17 local community organisations and volunteer groups (Appendix 3)
- 27 community members directly involved in the program as:

6 community panellists

21 partnering in co-designing and supporting delivery of students' community projects

- 633 community members attending program events
- 237,779 direct and indirect beneficiaries of students' community projects. (Appendix 5)

2. What has Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts delivered?

During 2022 Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts delivered:

- 3 community engagement events:
 - Community Launch and Partner Information Night
 - Student Pitch event
 - Student Showcase/Expo
- 15 philanthropic community action projects co-designed and realised by students with community partners
- 4 steering committee meetings
- 4 working group and professional learning meetings
- 1 teacher professional development day

Media Reach:

- 652 social media engagements across Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn
- 10,098 social media reach of pages
- Over 200,000 audience reach for 2022 across Victoria and Bass Coast region including publications and radio (ABC Gippsland, ABC Regional, Phillip Island Advertiser, South Gippsland Sentinel Times, Gippslandia and others)

3. To what extent have children demonstrated growth in positive social and emotional skills?

Teachers provided Student Progress Reports identifying their observed impact of Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts on each students' demonstrated behaviour. The progress reports include five areas of relevance to this evaluation question – self-confidence, teamwork, empathy, respect for individual differences and equity. The progress reports indicate that:

- 82% of students demonstrated improved self-confidence as a result of participation in Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts
- 73% demonstrated improved teamwork

- 60% demonstrated improved empathy
- 46% demonstrated improved respect for individual differences
- 60% demonstrated improved equity allowing everyone to learn.

4. To what extent have children learnt and applied creative learning skills, improved their educational engagement, and achieved educational outcomes?

Student Progress Reports include five dimensions of relevance to this evaluation question: engagement, self-directed learning, perseverance, literacy and numeracy.

The Student Progress Reports indicate that:

- 79% of children demonstrated improvement in self-directed learning
- 76% demonstrated increased perseverance
- 64% demonstrated improved in literacy
- 63% demonstrated improved numeracy
- 61% of children showed improved Behavioral Engagement willingness to participate in class through their involvement in Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts
- 63% demonstrated greater Effective Engagement wanting to be in the classroom
- 72% demonstrated increased Cognitive Engagement applying learning and capabilities from this program to other activities in class, the playground and elsewhere.

It is important to note that Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts is not delivered as a literacy and numeracy program. However, we include this data at the request of schools who wish to understand the impact of the program on this core curriculum.

5. To what extent have children learnt and applied leadership and community engagement skills?

Three dimensions in the Student Progress Reports are relevant to the development and application of leadership and community engagement skills by children – leadership skills, community engagement and social awareness.

The Student Progress Reports indicate that:

- 71% of children demonstrated improved understanding and practice of leadership skills
- 85% demonstrated improved understanding and capacity to participate in community engagement
- 85% demonstrated improved social awareness

6. To what extent has the community had a positive engagement with students and the school?

Data shows that the three schools developed new or stronger links with:

- 17 local and regional community groups
- 388 community members engaged in the program
- 245 community members engaged in events
- 237,000+ community members benefited directly or indirectly from student community action projects at a local and regional level.

Students forged relationships with 74 key members of community groups with whom they partnered.

7. To what extent have students achieved <u>age-appropriate level</u> or higher across all domains?

Analysis of data from the Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts evaluation indicates the following changes in the percentage of students achieving age-appropriate levels or higher (as assessed by their teachers) in each domain at the beginning and at the end of the program:

	Age-appropriate levels at		
	Beginning	End	%Change
Social and Emotional Skills			
Confidence	32%	87%	171%
Teamwork	55%	71%	29%
Empathy	65%	78%	20%
Respect for individual differences	69%	82%	19%
• Equity (allowing everyone to learn)	53%	83%	57%
Creative Learning Skills			
Self-directed learning	26%	69%	165%
Perseverance	42%	76%	81%
Literacy skills	32%	72%	125%
Numeracy skills	28%	69%	146%
Behavioral Engagement	55%	78%	42%
Effective Engagement	55%	78%	42%
Cognitive Engagement	37%	74%	100%
Leadership			
Leadership skills	41%	74%	80%
Community engagement	19%	74%	289%
Social awareness	46%	79%	72%

8. To what extent did students exceed the expectations of the teacher?

- 95% of students exceeded the expectations of the teacher at Newhaven Primary School
- 43% of students exceeded the expectations of the teachers at Powlett River Primary School
- 69% of students exceeded the expectations of the teachers at Bass Valley Primary School

9. To what extent have children built their trusted community networks? (Appendix 4)

Children responded to the question: 'How many people can you talk to about things that matter to you?' by filling in a simple graphic representation of their community support networks both pre- and post-program. Students indicated the following median increases in access to trusted community support networks, including:

- 31% increase in positive connections with other students at school
- 62% increase in connections with kids outside school
- 30% increase in trusted connections with adults at school
- 94% increase in trusted connections with adults in the community
- 5% increase in family connections

Summary of Evaluation Outcomes in 2022

Question	Outcomes 2022
1. To what extent have students, teachers, and community members participated in Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts?	 78 students in grade 5 and 6 participated teachers / education support staff 13 school principal / educator 17 community organisations / volunteer groups 27 community members directly involved 633 community members attended events 237,000+ community member beneficiaries of student projects
2. What has Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts delivered?	3 community engagement events 15 community action projects led by children
3. To what extent have students demonstrated growth in positive social and emotional skills ?	 82% increased confidence 73% improved teamwork 60% improved empathy 46% improved respect for differences 60% improved equity – allowing everyone to learn
4. To what extent have students learnt and applied creative learning skills, improved educational engagement, and achieved educational outcomes?	 79% improved self-directed learning 76% improved perseverance 64% improved literacy 63% improved numeracy 61% behavioral engagement 63% improved effective engagement - willingness to participate 72% improved cognitive engagement
5. To what extent have students learnt and applied leadership and community engagement skills?	 71% improved leadership skills 85% improved community engagement 85% improved social awareness

6. To what extent has the community had a positive engagement with students and schools?	The three schools developed positive connections with: 17 local community groups 633 community members engaged in program 237,000+ community members benefiting from student community action projects.		
7. To what extent have students achieved age- appropriate levels across all domains?		2022	
	Before	After	Change
Confidence Teamwork	32%	87%	171%
	55%	71%	29%
Empathy	65%	78%	20%
Respect for individual differences	69%	82%	19%
Equity	53%	83%	57%
Effective Engagement	55%	78%	41%
Cognitive Engagement	37%	74%	100%
Self-Directed Learning	26%	69%	65%
Perseverance	42%	76%.	81%
Literacy skills	32%	72%	25%
Numeracy skills	28%	69%	46%
Positive Leadership skills	41%	74%	80%
Community engagement	19%	74%	289%
Social awareness	46%	79%	72%
8. To what extent did students exceed expectations of the teacher?	77% of students exceeded teacher expectations		
9. To what extent have students increased their trusted community networks?	31% increase - students at school 62% increase - kids outside school		ts at school
			tside
	30% incre	ease - adults a	at school
	94% increase - adults in community		n
	5% increa connectio	ase - positive [.] ons	family

CONCLUSION

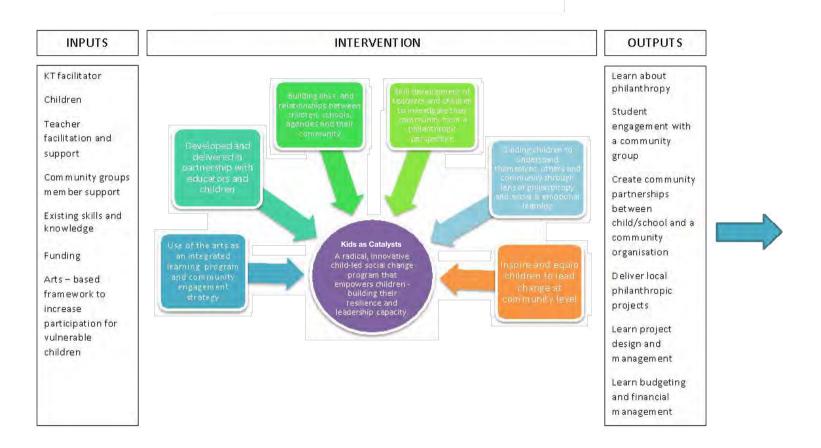
Based on the above results, it is possible to conclude that:

 Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts builds children's resilience by significantly improving their: Self-confidence 	Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts also makes a significant contribution towards improved:	Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts enhances educational engagement by improving children's:
 Teamwork Empathy Respect for individual differences Equity Educational engagement Self-directed learning Perseverance Literacy and numeracy Leadership skills Community engagement Social awareness 	 Safe community networks for children Engagement of families with schools Connection between schools and local community groups 	 Community engagement Willingness to participate Involvement in real world learning Social awareness Creative problem solving

Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts is based on sound evidence of the value of creativity in engaging and educating children; and builds an evidence base for the value of community engagement as a key tool for building educational engagement.

In 2022, Kids Thrive delivered a successful Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts program, with evidence from this evaluation indicating the program has improved children's personal, educational and social capacities; built links between families, schools and community groups; and extended children's trusted community networks. From these results, we can draw the conclusion that the Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts program contributed significantly to building children's resilience and educational engagement, and fostered strong connections between children and their community in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

APPENDIX 1: Kids as Catalysts Project Logic



OUTCOMES

Short Term outcomes

- Skill development Personal attributes - Leaders hip - Social awareness
- Team work
- Communication
- Pitching for funding
- Literacy and numeracy
- Community engagement
- Self-directed learning
- Financial management/budgeting
- Financial management/buogeting
- Project design, planning and implementing

Medium Term Dutcomes Increased social connection between community members and the children in the community Increased social connectedness between school communities Increased self-exteem ands elf-worth of children Increased leaders hip skills of children Increased understanding of philanthropy, generosity and community pride Built resilience, confidence and empathy of children Increased creativity, awareness and desire to affect change in the community Linking social capital between a broad range of community members

Long Term Outcomes

Improved collective wellbeing through bridging social capital Children active participants in community Increased social capital promotes educational achievement Decreased risk of engaging in health damaging behaviours through positive civil engagement Create self-sustaining processes to address key social issues Development of next community leaders Increased apirations due to community connectedness, pride and self-worth

Kids as Catalysts outcomes mapped against the socio-ecological model

- Empathy

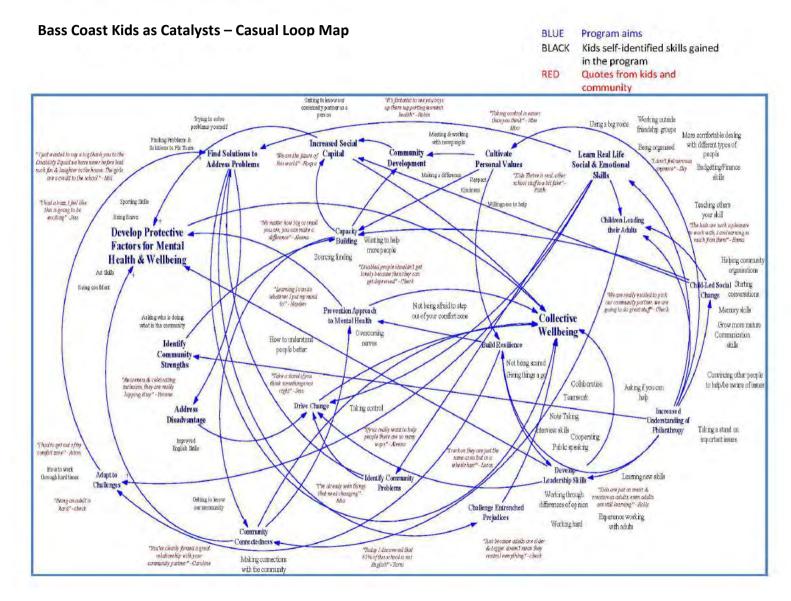
- Confidence

- Responsibility

- Willingness to participate

Improve collective wellbeing through bridging social capit Children have access to what they need to become contributing members of social	
Freate self-sustaining processes to address key social issu Positive mental health of community members through active engagement and social connected the	Societal
Critidren active participants in common	D Inequality
Development of next community leade	
Increased Social connection between community members and the children in the community	and the second section of
Greater understanding of community organisations aims and purpo	community
Linking social capital between a broad range of community membe	Connectedness
increased social connections between childre	
Increased social connected dess between school community	
Increased social cohesion between children and community membe	Internersonal
Increased self-esteem, self-worth, confidence and aspirations of childra	I AL ALLERCE
Ruilt resilience, contidence and empathy, and children embrace their personal value	o Humentes
Increased social capital promotes educational achievement of childro	
Increased understanding of philanthropy, generosity and community spi	
Increase in child agency and papacity to tackle problem	Individual
Increased leadership skills, creativity and desire to altect change in the common	
5k0l development and positive personal attribut	
 Decreased risk of engaging in health damaging behaviours through positive civil engagement 	

APPENDIX 2: Kids as Catalysts Causal Loop Map Connecting Program Objectives to Observed Program Outcomes



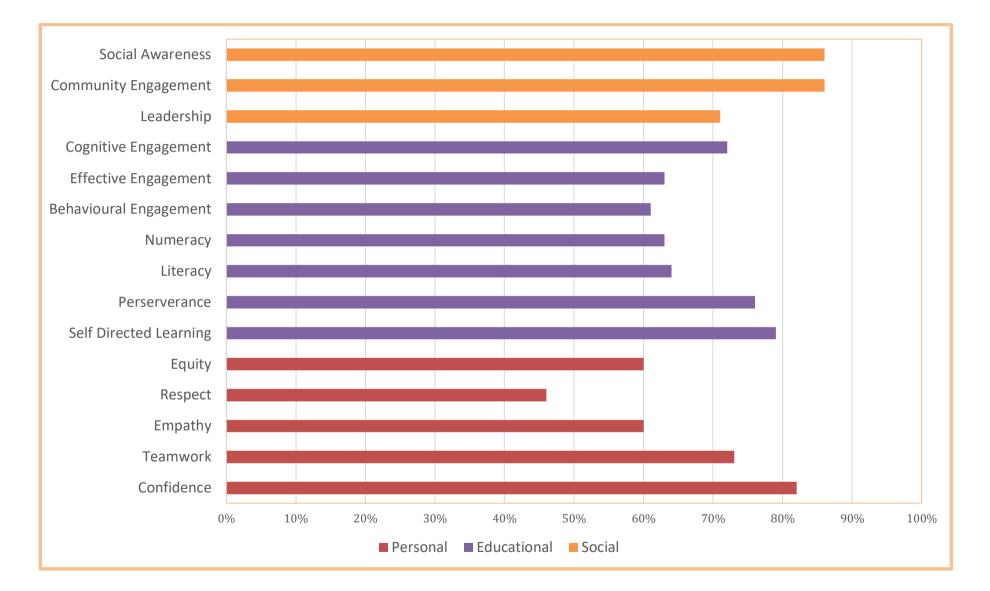
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APPENDIX 3: Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts 2022 - Student Community Action Projects

Project Name	Community Partner	Students' Concerns	Project Description
Wall of Wings	Western Port Biosphere Reserve Foundation	Endangered Shorebirds becoming extinct and the destruction of their habitat	Educate people about endangered shorebirds and how climate change is affecting their environment by producing prints for an International art exhibition called Wall of Wings - presented in Altona
Free 3D Hands	Free 3D Hands	Helping people with hand differences to be active in the community	Make and trial a new concept for a 3D printed device enabling people without a hand to hold cups, knives and forks. The template will be made available worldwide for people to download and print for free
Create a Yarning Circle	Phillip Island Nature Park	To create a safe space for people of all cultures to meet. The large rocks are for people to sit on for the yarning circle	Pay for large rocks for Yarning Circle, and contribute our time to decorating a timber pole as the entry for the Yarning Circle at Phillip Island Koala Park. Consult with a Bunurong elder over morning tea about local significance and create designs together.
Koala Group	Phillip Island Landcare	Koalas are dying because they are near the roads and don't have enough trees to climb. They are being hit by cars.	Planting Gum/Swamp trees for the koala habitat
Cat Curfew	Community Safety Officer Bass Coast Shire Council	Too much wildlife is being killed by domestic cats on Phillip Island, and people's cats are being injured and killed on our roads. from being injured or killed	Produce and edit a video to educate the community about the new Cat Curfew Laws starting in 2023 – including information on how to contain your cats safely. Video to be used on Bass Coasty Shire Council website.

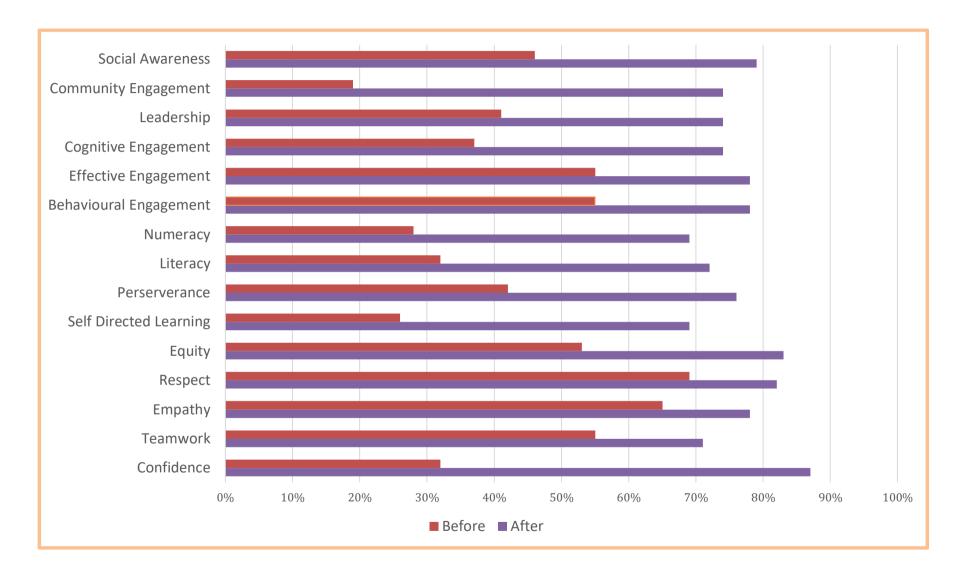
			•
Gender Equality Matters	Gippsland Centre Against Sexual Assault	We still have a lot of gender inequality, and want to get people to understand that Gender Equality is good for everyone	Hold an Orange Day with the whole school to raise awareness for children. And have guest speakers to say a speech about gender equality.
Here and Now – Remember When	Phillip Island Senior Citizens Club	Kids don't know what life was like for our older citizens when they were kids.	Make a DVD capturing the history of what life was like when our senior citizens were our age and what has changed for us as kids. We will go to the Senior Citizens Club in Cowes to film interviews.
Finding Friends	Kernot Hall and Reserve Committee	Kids in the Kernot community are lonely. They are not getting to meet each other because they go to 5 different schools and the area is remote, with homes far apart.	Hold a treasure hunt activity at the Kernot Hall with the treasure being seedlings for the community garden. We will do this at the Kernot Hall Kids Club so kids in the Kernot community can meet each other and make friends
Butterfly Plant Packs	Bass Coast Landcare Network	The environment is losing butterflies which affects the pollination of flowers and plants	Design butterfly planting packs at the Bass Nursery with Landcare and some volunteers
Creative Inclusivity	UpBeat Arts Therapy & Interchange Gippsland (Wonthaggi)	Some people with disabilities may be non- verbal. Art therapy provides a form of communication that does not rely on being verbal. Art therapy also connects them to the community	Making a creative mosaic painting at the Corinella Hall with UpBeat Arts and clients from Interchange.
Interchange Concert	Interchange Gippsland (Wonthaggi)	Raising awareness about the important work Interchange do. They give people with disability choice and control. This is really important because everyone regardless of ability should have opportunities	Create a concert for people with disabilities who have a band and love to perform. We want to increase their confidence and give them an opportunity to perform.

Kugerungmome Kids	West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority	Education and learning about the traditional owners of the Powlett River (Kugerungmome) and their ways of managing the land. Clean up the area of rubbish.	A clean-up day at Powlett River, and hosting a cultural event for students to learn about the history of Kugerungmome. Rubbish collected to be put into an octopus sculpture to be displayed
The Weird Flu	Wonthaggi & District Historical Society	Kids' experiences of Covid are important and should be heard	Record our stories about our experiences of the Covid pandemic, and interview Senior Citizens who lived through the Polio pandemic. Produce a short documentary for the historical society's touch screen for everyone to see
Something Fishy!	Fish Care Mornington Peninsula and Westernport Inc. with Corinella Foreshore Reserve Committee	People are overfishing and it's threatening our fish stocks and the food chain	Record interviews on fish and fishing, and make this into a podcast at the local radio 3MFM at Inverloch. We are doing this because people will know about the impact and they will know how to help
Fun Fishes Show Bag	Corinella Foreshore Reserve Committee with Fishcare Mornington Peninsula and Westernport Inc.	People are over-fishing which is hurting our fish and will lead to endangerment	Make showbags with information about fishing to help get the word out to prevent extinction of our fish. We will do this at the Corinella General Store



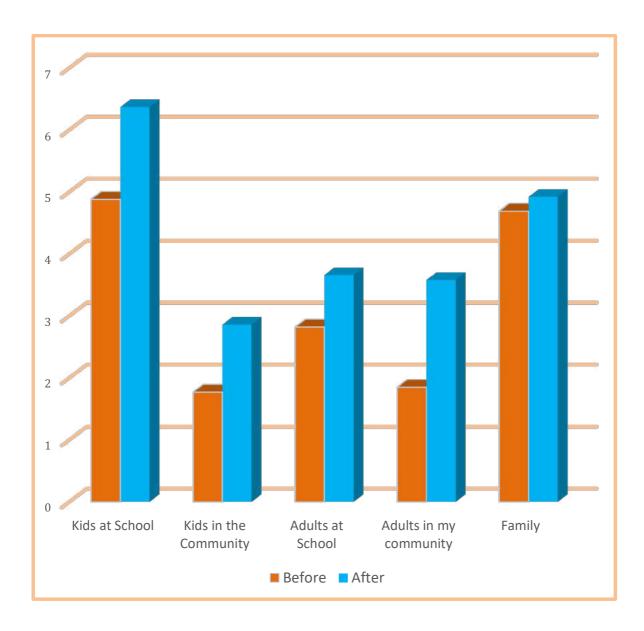
APPENDIX 4: Percentage of Students Demonstrating Positive Change

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APPENDIX 5: Students achieving <u>age-appropriate level</u> or higher before and after program

APPENDIX 6: Changes in Students' Trusted Social Networks 2022



APPENDIX 7: Program Reach 2022

Role	Reach
Students	78
Teaching & Support Staff	10
Community Partners (confirmed)	17
Potential Community Partners (excl. final selection)	4
Community Members at community events	245
Community Reach of Student Actions	237779
TOTAL	238133

Breakdown of Student Action Reach	Reach
Western Port Biosphere Reserve Foundation	200
Free 3D Hands	6000+
Phillip Island Nature Park – Yarning Circle	120000
Phillip Island Landcare	3
Bass Coast Shire Council – Cat Curfew video	1000s
Gippsland Centre Against Sexual Assault – Orange Day	190
Phillip Island Senior Citizens Club – Local elders	120
Kernot Hall and Reserve Committee – Kids' Day	26
Corinella Foreshore Reserve Committee & Fishcare Mornington Peninsula and Westernport Inc Showbags	150
Fishcare Mornington Peninsula and Westernport Inc. & Corinella Foreshore Reserve Committee - Podcast	10,000
Bass Coast Landcare Network	32
UpBeat Arts Therapy (with Interchange Gippsland)	7
Interchange Gippsland (Wonthaggi)	65
West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority	6
Wonthaggi & District Historical Society	100,000
Total	237799

APPENDIX 8: Students' Self-Evaluation Tool 1

Example Drawings -

How I saw MYSELF before and after Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts





Kids as Catalysts improved me a lot with social stuff

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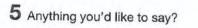


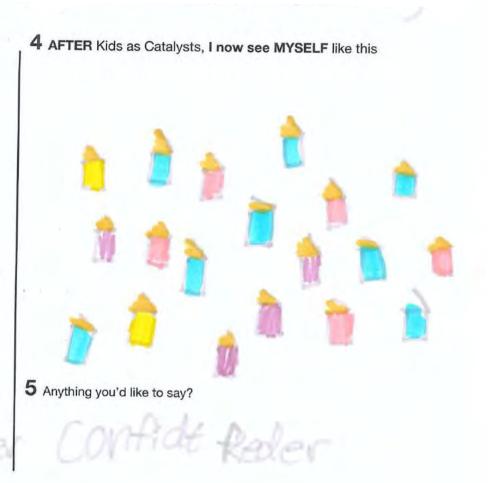




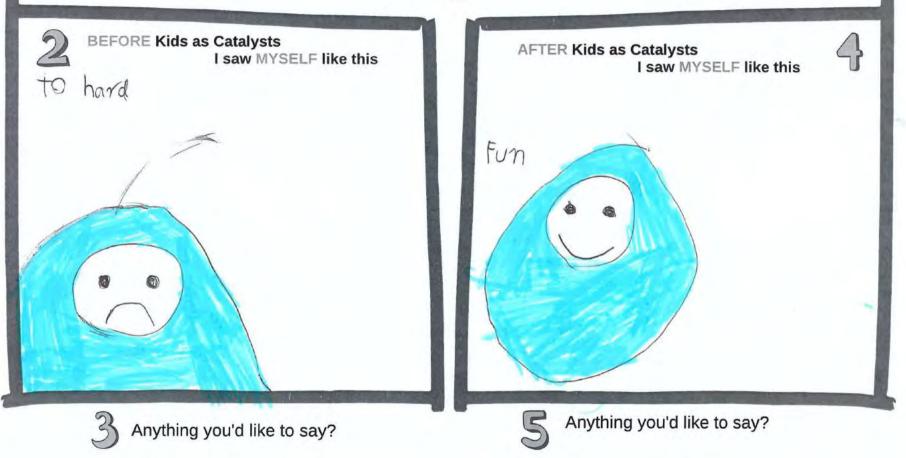
3 BEFORE Kids as Catalysts, I saw MYSELF like this

Not a confidt Red

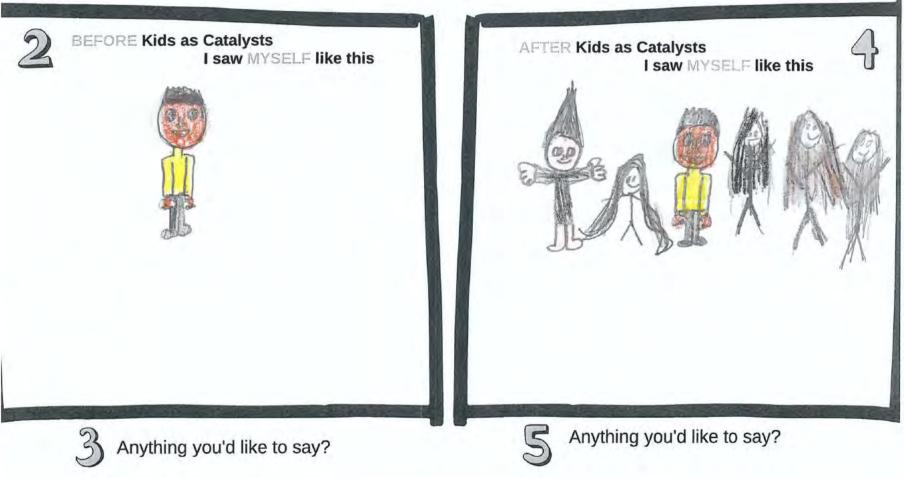




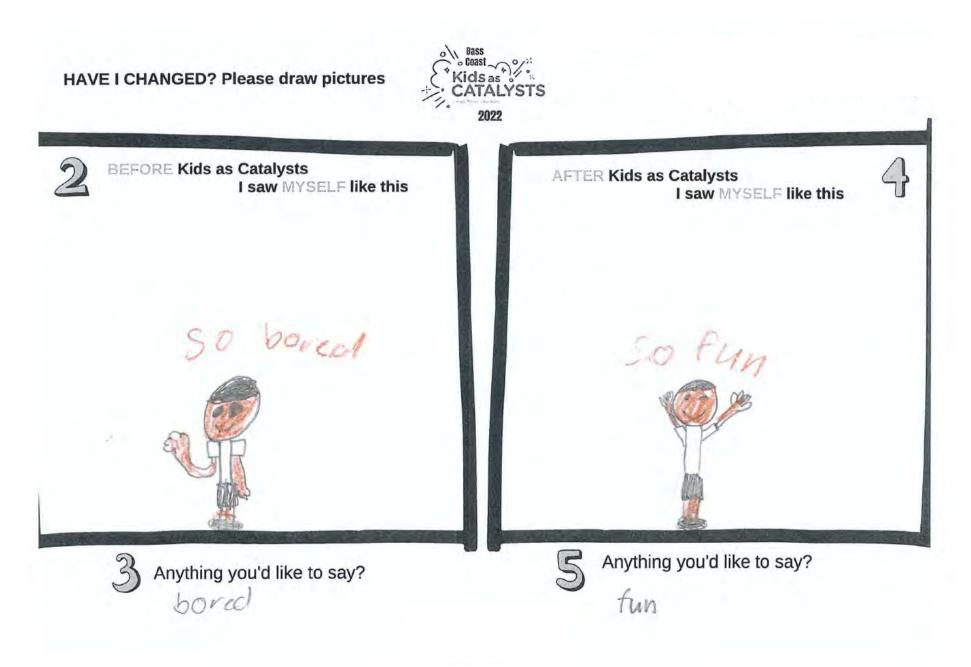






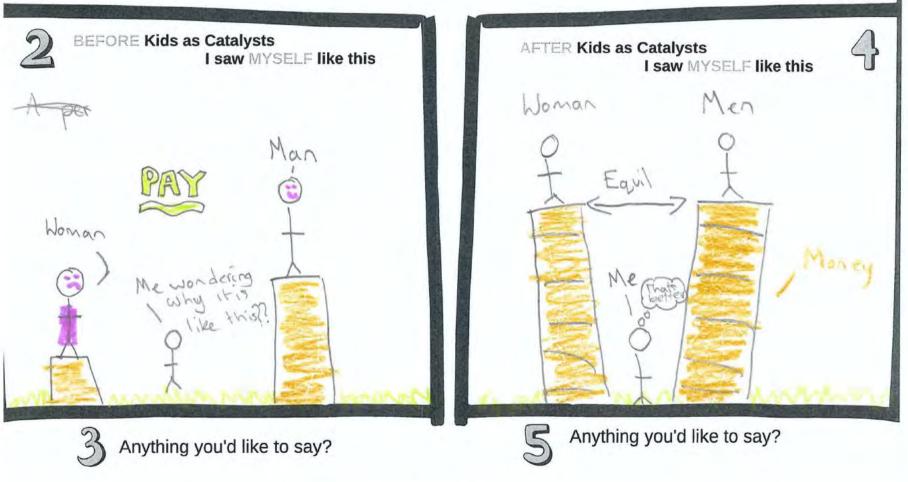


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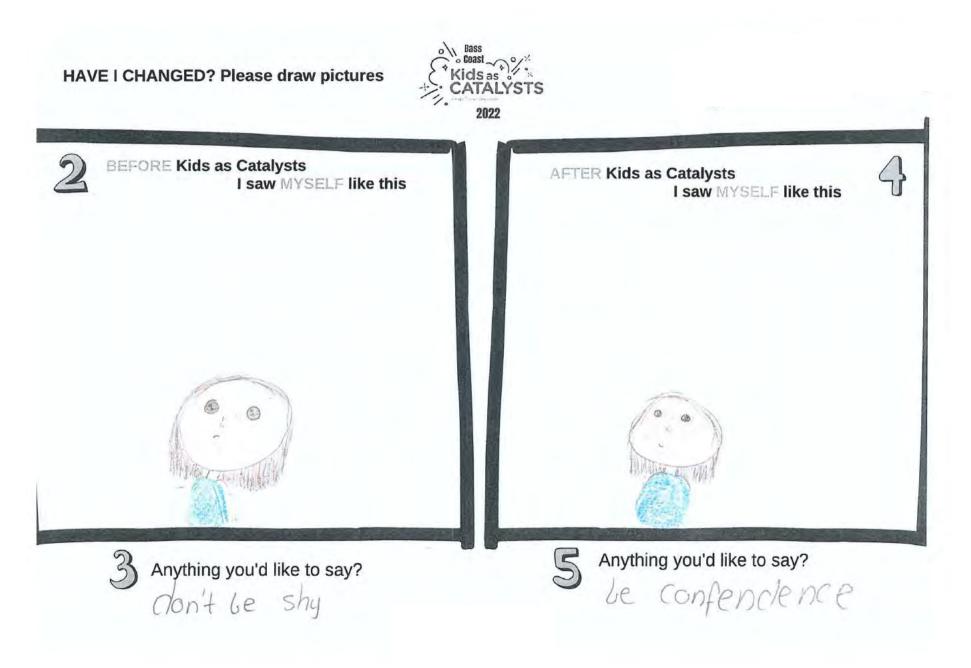


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HAVE I CHANGED? Please draw pictures 2022 **BEFORE Kids as Catalysts** AFTER Kids as Catalysts I saw MYSELF like this I saw MYSELF like this Anything you'd like to say? 3 5 Anything you'd like to say?





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Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts Evaluation Report 2022









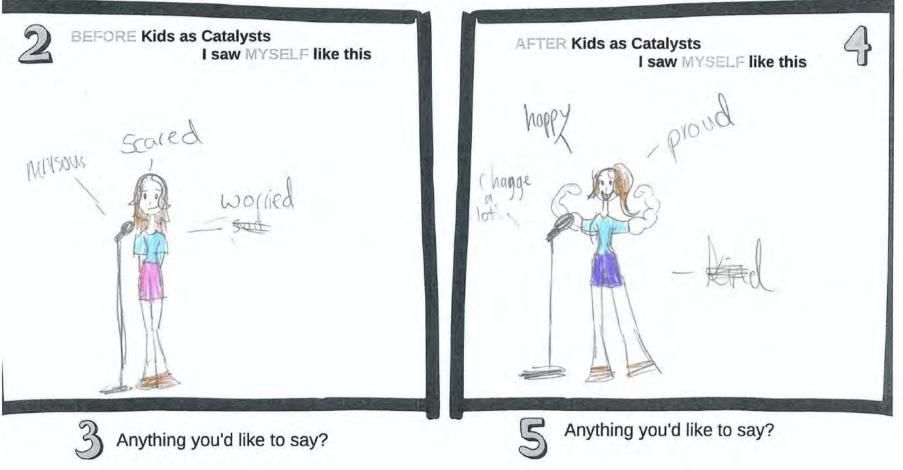
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3 BEFORE Kids as Catalysts, I saw MYSELF like this









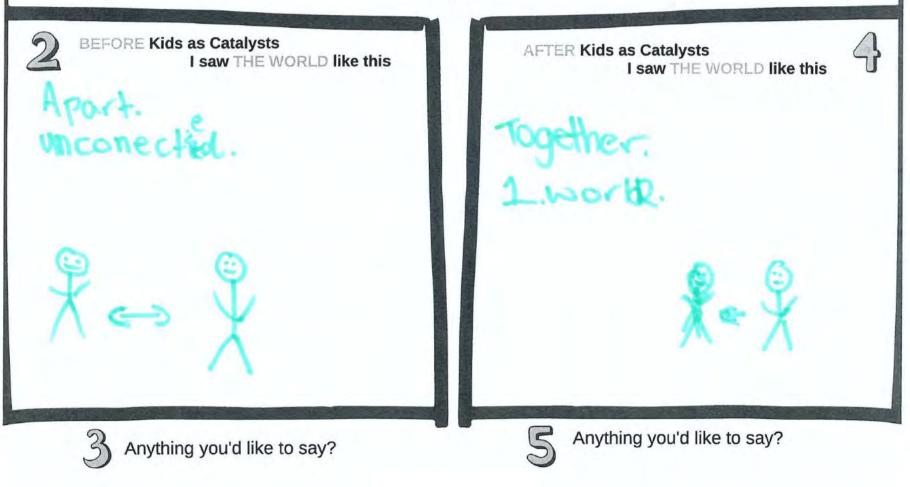


APPENDIX 9: Students' Self-Evaluation Tool 2

Example Drawings –

How I saw the WORLD before and after Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts



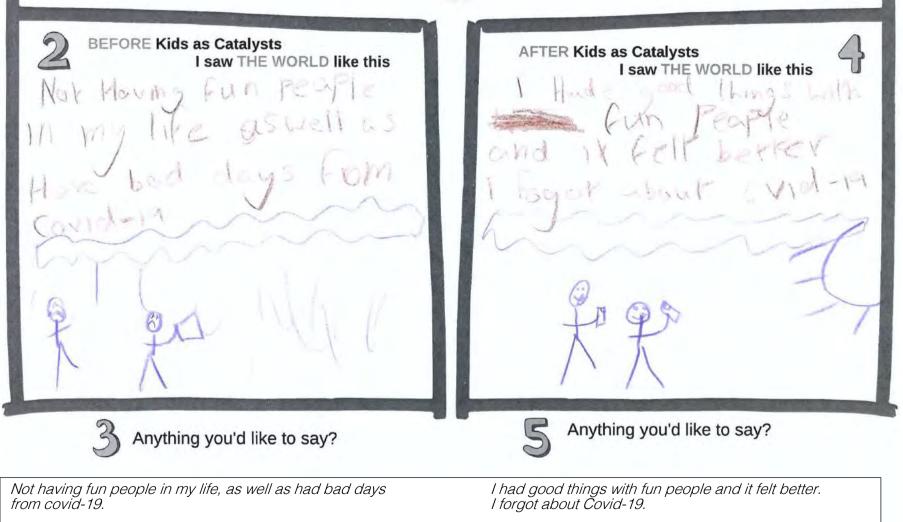


HAVE I CHANGED? Please draw pictures 2022 **BEFORE Kids as Catalysts AFTER Kids as Catalysts** I saw THE WORLD like this I saw THE WORLD like this as many people know more Know Pep 2 lil Fail mode Connu MU to Lommun 10 Anything you'd like to say? 5 Anything you'd like to say?

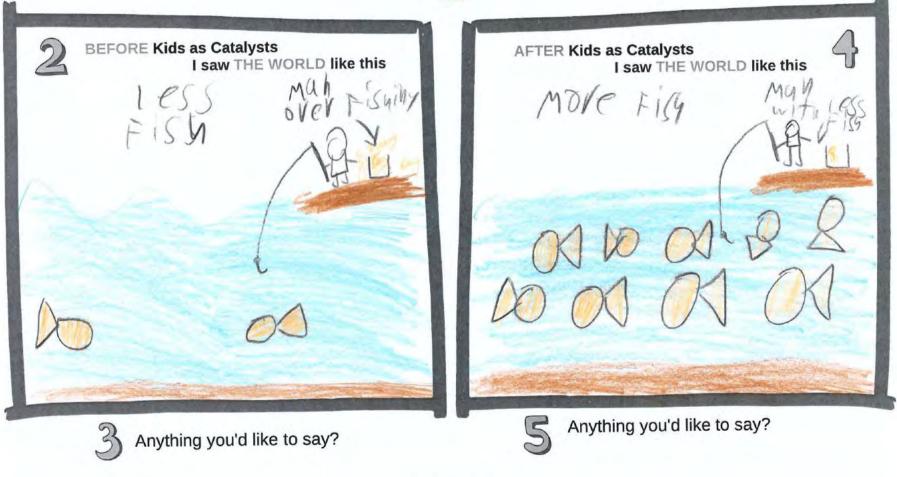
Earth – small. Didn't know as many people

Earth – big. Know more people and feel more connected to my community









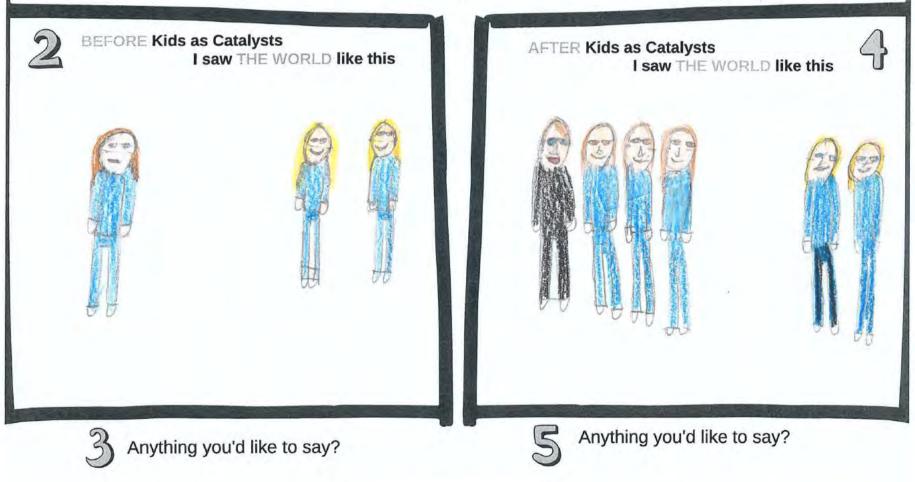
Less fish. Man overfishing.

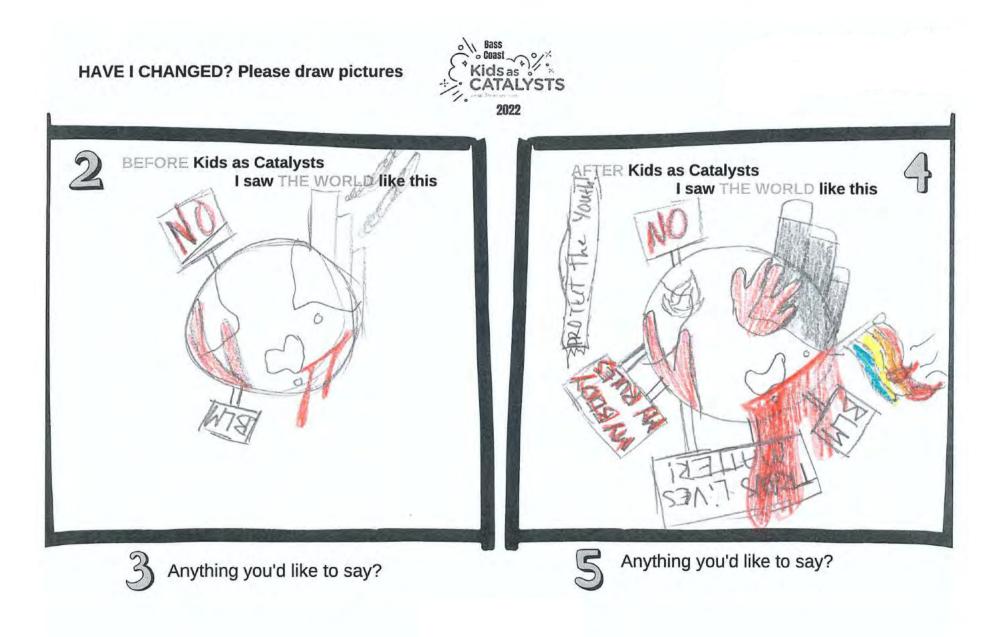
More fish. Man with less fish.













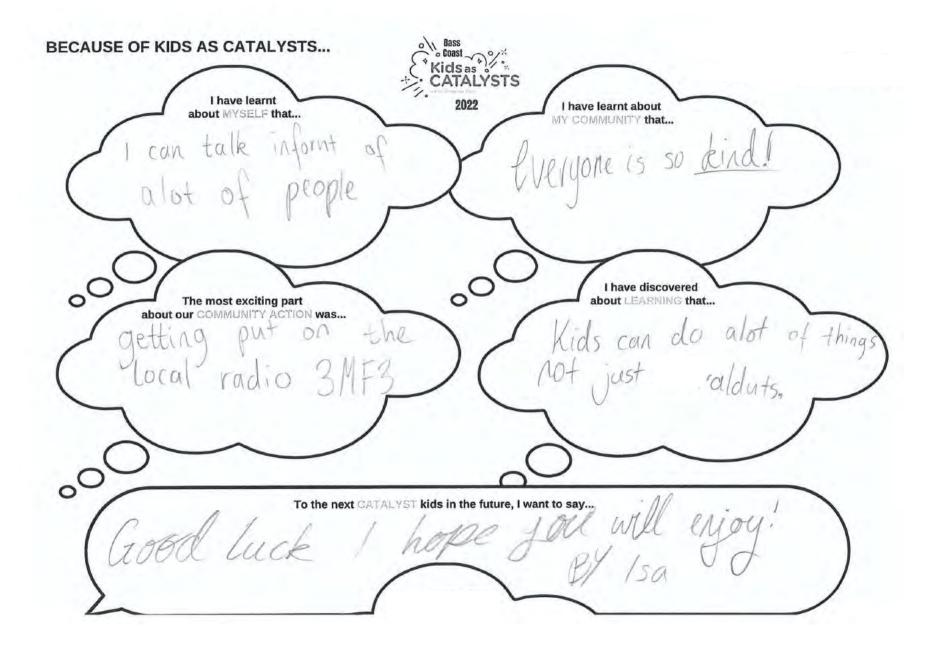


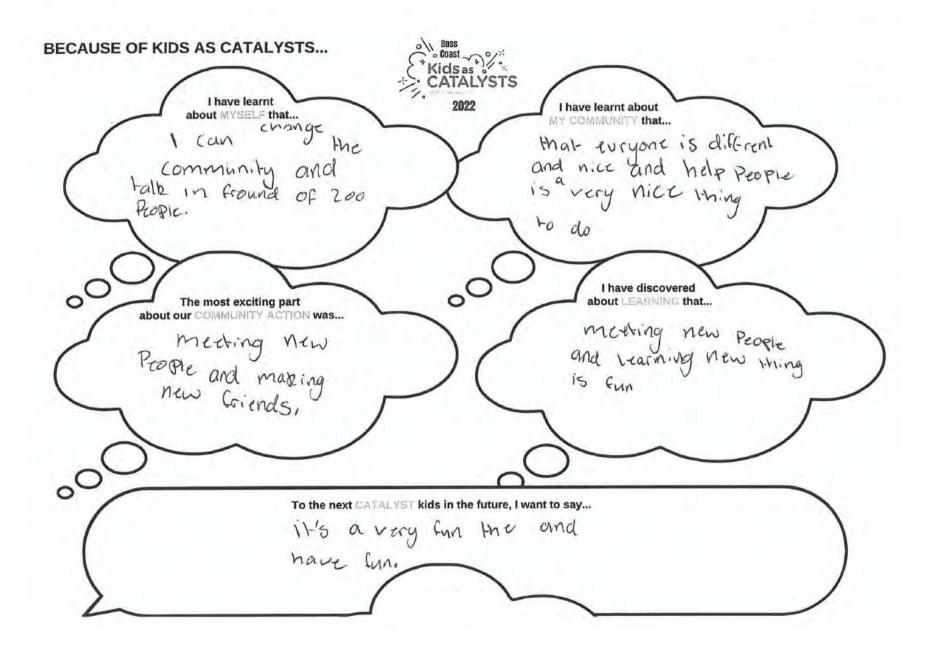


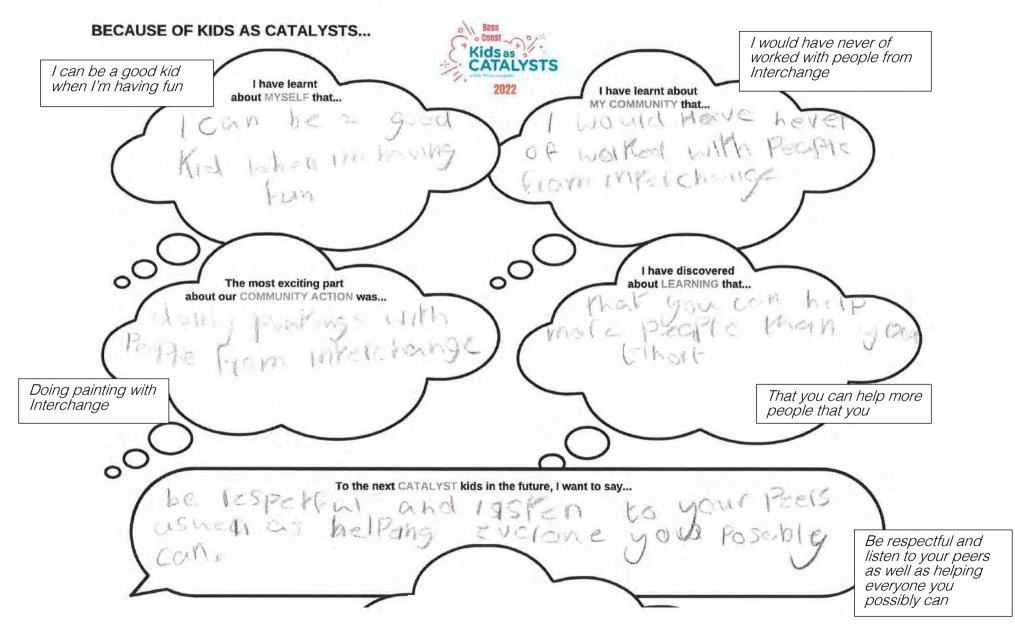
APPENDIX 10: Student Self-Evaluation Tool 3

Examples of Student Post-Program Reflection Sheets

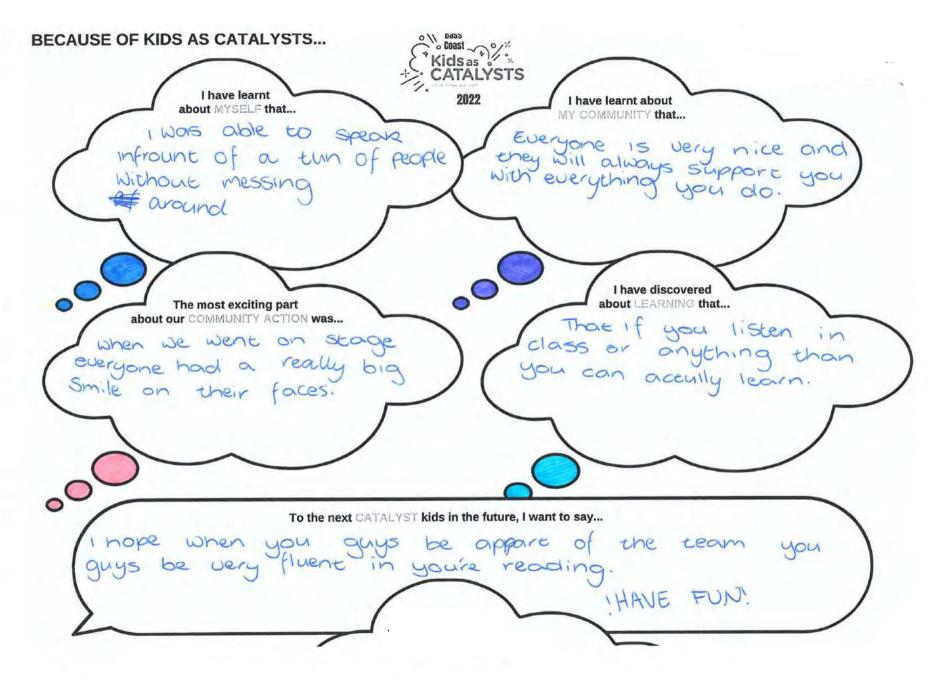
BECAUSE OF KIDS AS CATALYSTS ... Kids as CATALYSTS I have learnt 2022 I have learnt about about MYSELF that ... MY COMMUNITY that ... speak confident PEOPIC Poweru can make have Mind that They support and change the deaso communit 00 °0 I have discovered The most exciting part about LEARNING that ... about our COMMUNITY ACTION was ... P Car about te PEOPI Say 00 To the next CATALYST kids in the future, I want to say ... When you IS That any thing out your wind OSSIGE 1011

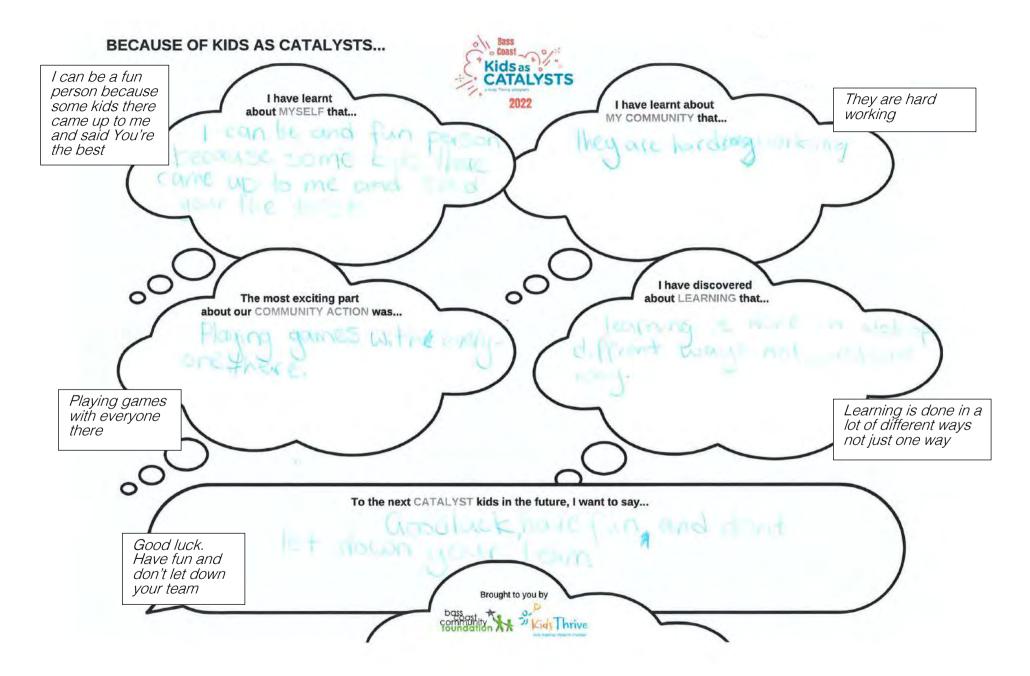


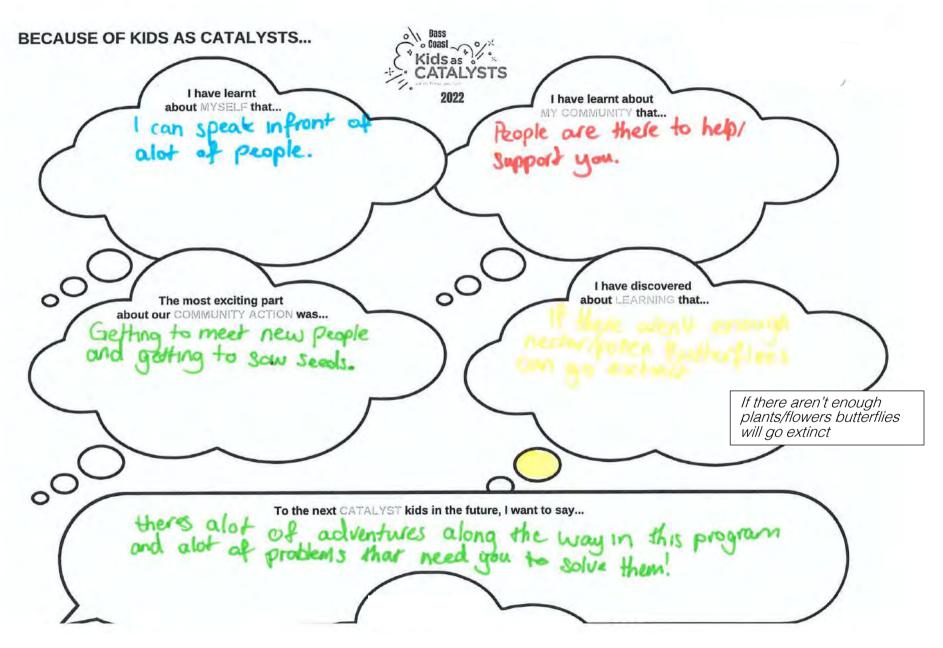






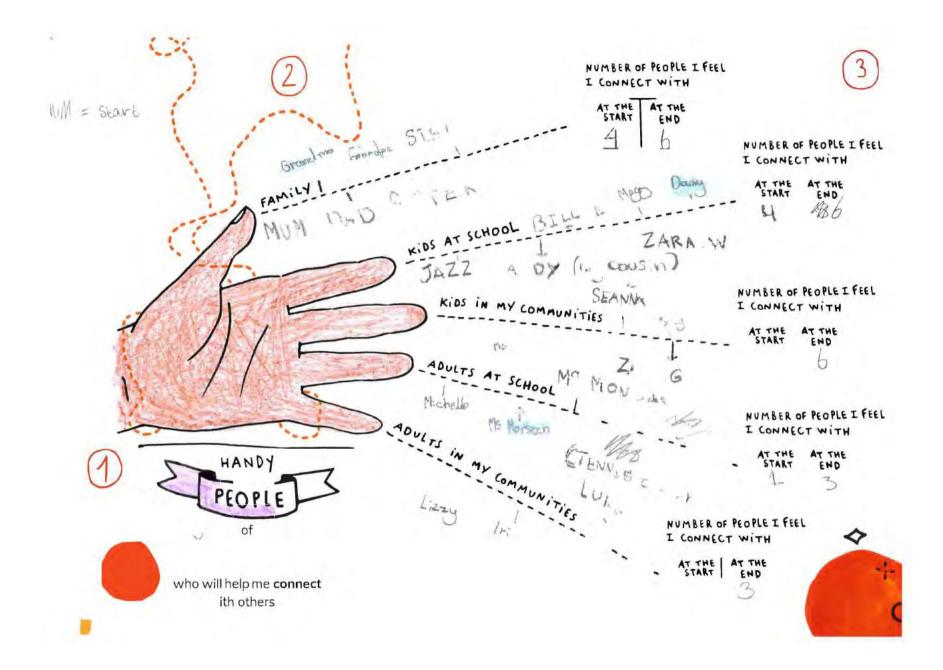


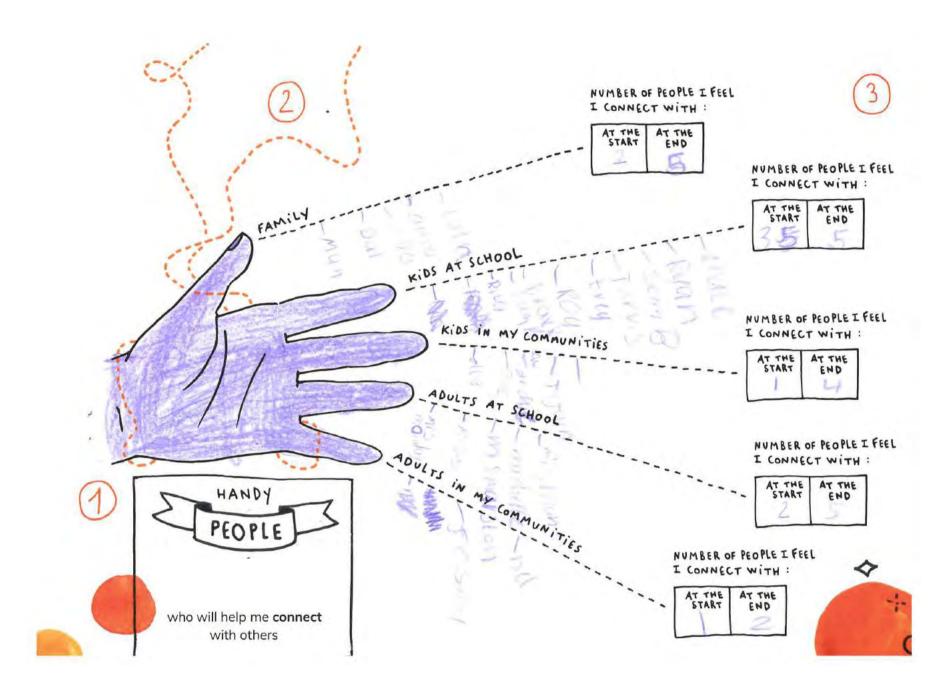




APPENDIX 11: Student self-evaluation tool 4

Examples of 'My Handy People' - before and after the program





APPENDIX 12: Community Partner Responses

Community Partners were sent an online survey at the end of the 2022 program requesting responses to questions about their insights and experiences of the program, and their engagement with the students and school. We received responses from 14 of the 15 community partners.

100% of respondents would recommend the Bass Coast Kids as Catalysts program to other community groups.

'Definitely worth sharing' Mike, Phillip Island Landcare

'Absolutely, and I have many times. Amazing people and work.' Alisha, Gippsland Centre Against Sexual Assault

Was there a personal benefit for you in participating in the program?

'Watching and learning from young people running their own actions/workshops for positive environmental outcomes.' Ewan, Phillip Island Nature Park

'The greatest personal benefit was working with a small group of students and assisting them in their planning, researching and presenting of their community action. I was delighted to be accepted and included by the team, to be listened to, for them to grow from the student/adult relationship to an equal relationship when discussing ideas and allocation of roles. I felt 30 years younger. My energy, my whole being - I just loved it - and made friends forever.' Irene, Wonthaggi & District Historical Society

'Connecting with a new school community.' Jess, Western Port Biosphere Foundation

'A chance to cooperate with and listen to the students, rather than leading.' Chris, UpBeat Art Therapy

'It was fun helping the kids achieve a great outcome, and also helped me look good to my organization.' Anthony, Bass Coast Shire Council

'It absolutely filled my cup to be involved with this program, particularly to experience the engagement and leadership of the young people that we worked with and across the program.' Alisha, Gippsland Centre Against Sexual Assault

Was there a benefit to your organisation or group in being involved in the program?

'The committee has only recently set up a kids' club and it was important for us to keep it relevant and interesting for the kids and what better way to do that than to have kids design a program?' Lisa, Kernot Kids Club

'The benefit to the Society was that we were able to capture video interviews with the polio survivor and the students regarding covid. This would never have happened without this program. The Society has also had wide media coverage as a result of the project, and we are proud that two of the students want to be involved as

volunteers at the museum. We hope this will lead to increased interest in future volunteering as they grow older.' Irene, Wonthaggi & District Historical Society

'Created awareness of art therapy with Wonthaggi Interchange'. Chris, UpBeat Arts Therapy

'I got to help produce what is predicted to be a very useful educational tool about the new cat laws for my organization, which will assist in getting the message out to residents in Bass Coast Shire.' Anthony, Bass Coast Shire Council

'The opportunities for participants to showcase their skills and to work with the children. The networking opportunities was a great perk too.' Bec, Interchange Gippsland

'For us, as a sexual assault service that provides services across Gippsland, visibility and community awareness of who we are and what we do is an important aspect of being able to provide services and supports to people who need them. Being able to be in front of the whole school and their community as an organisation, and to be friendly, approachable and accessible, is really valuable to us.' Alisha, Gippsland Centre Against Sexual Assault

Did you perceive any benefits for the students involved?

'Growing confidence. Articulation of non-divisible tangible actions for wildlife / nature.' Ewan Phillip Island Nature Park

'A chance to lead. The realisation that people with disability are not to be feared nor thought of as different.' Chris, UpBeat Arts Therapy

'Seeing students grow from hesitant, apprehensive, expecting an adult to do the work, and have all the say, to each individual in the group participating, listening to each other's ideas, making decisions which were best for the project, supporting each other in difficult tasks of standing in front of a large audience, and delivering their project. I saw the following benefits - each grew in confidence, in presenting work within the group, the major growth in confidence was standing and speaking loudly and with purpose to the wide audience. Interviews - each shared the questions to be asked when interviewing, learnt interview techniques to get the best information from the interviewee, learnt to follow up with relevant points, clarify, extend it. Respected each other when another in their team was taking charge. Learnt social interaction with strangers and lost that apprehension, which then made everyone else feel comfortable. Took pride in their achievements as could be seen by the smiles on their faces and the positive interaction with each other and the audience'. Irene Wonthaggi & District Historical Society

'The students had a sense of pride in leading the project and were very impressive in their learnings.' Deb, West Gippsland Catchment Authority

'They got to think about and expand on ideas, plan and organize how they were going to produce the video, and finally put it into action, and edit the material to make the final version.' Anthony, Bass Coast Shire Council

'The interaction with our participants and having to re-frame some of their language when talking about people with disabilities was a great experience to witness with the children we worked with.' Bec, Interchange Gippsland

'I believe that the students we worked closely with gained an understanding of gender equality/equity, fairness and what it looks like, and what it doesn't. In addition to building understanding we also built relationships with the school and their staff - this is a great basis for further engagement and work, from both sides, and we look forward to working with these schools in the future.' Alisha from Gippsland Centre Against Sexual Assault

Did you gain any insights from your involvement in the program and with the students?

'How schools and community can co-operate and the variety of opportunities that are there for schools and community to work together to develop a child's growth.' Irene, Wonthaggi & District Historical Society

'That extending the work of the Biosphere in Bass needs to be a priority.' Jess, Western Port Biosphere Foundation

'Just how capable young people can be if given the chance to use and develop skills, under the guidance of adults with knowledge and experience.' Anthony, Bass Coast Shire Council

Did you feel a strengthened relationship with the school?

'It is great to have made connections with the school and know who we can contact in future for ideas/opportunities.' Bec, Interchange Gippsland

'From me being apprehensive at the start, going into a school that I had no prior connection with, to going into a great school atmosphere: from the reception, the student who helped sign, and the most welcoming place that I went back to with a big smile on my face - every time I knew we were catching up.' Irene, Wonthaggi & District Historical Society

'We got to see, talk and help each other to produce mutually beneficial outcomes.' Anthony, Bass Coast Shire Council

'We certainly built our relationship with leadership and staff and the schools are keen to work with us in the future, which is fabulous.' Alisha, Gippsland Centre Against Sexual Assault

'Connections with schools - ability to engage with them in future' Elysia, Fishcare Victoria

Did other staff or volunteers in your organisation think the partnership with the students was positive?

'It was remarked to me by staff from Interchange that they had never seen their participants so engrossed and quiet while doing an activity. The interaction between

the students and participants from Interchange was remarkable.' Chris, UpBeat Arts Therapy

'Staff in my organization thought it was wonderful.' Anthony, Bass Coast Shire Council

'Support staff loved the interaction with the children and seeing the hard work our participants have put into their music pay off.' Bec, Interchange Gippsland

'We LOVED working with the students - everything about it was wonderful. Their leadership, drive, conviction and enthusiasm were so great.' Alisha, Gippsland Centre Against Sexual Assault

92% of community partners would be involved in the program again.

'This was a very positive learning experience for the students. Providing insight into working with people with disability breaks down barriers.' Chris, UpBeat Arts Therapy

'Working with young people in this way is "prevention proper" - we are hopefully able to play a role in shaping attitudes, behaviours and patterns which build a culture/community that is safe and respectful for all people.' Alisha, Gippsland Centre Against Sexual Assault

What are the strengths of the program?

'Develops students' social skills and problem solving skills. Meaningful platform for students to see their ideas in real world settings - enacted upon.' Lisa, Fishcare

'Relationships that the kids form. This is also the case in reverse' Lisa, Kernot Kids Club

'The ability to give the students the opportunity to lead and cooperate.' Chris, UpBeat Arts Therapy

'Community involvement' Mike, Phillip Island Landcare

'Giving kids strength in coming up with ideas' Lisa, Phillip Island Senior Citizens Club

'Giving confidence to children to participate in their community.' Lisa, Bass Valley Landcare Network

'Great example that education doesn't just happen within the school room. It gives both students and adults - some who were older - a chance to interact.' Irene, Wonthaggi & District Historical Society

'Achieved some great outcomes and gave young minds and old a chance to work together and learn from each other.' Anthony, Bass Coast Shire Council

Can you share a moving moment?

'Hearing the students acknowledge what they had learnt and how they felt positive about the future' Ewan, Phillip Island Nature Park

'The kids controlled the kids club at a time when things could have got away from us. They continually asked if there was anything else they could do which was lovely.' Lisa, Kernot Kids Club

'There were quite a few, I loved seeing our group do their presentation to the community panel.' Lisa, Bass Valley Landcare Network

'The Showcase - when one of my group had not got up to speak in front of an audience at the Pitch, and it was well accepted that the student didn't like speaking to other people, and to not only see the student stand up in front of 200 people, read clearly, had a smile, and looked at the audience - you would have thought that the student had done that many times before - it was incredibly special.' Irene, Wonthaggi & District Historical Society

'Receiving my thankyou letter in the mail today at work! So beautiful and so touched to receive it.' Jess, Western Port Biosphere Foundation

'When all participants brought their individual piece of the painting puzzle together to form one collaborative masterpiece. Magical... When one of the Interchange participants asked if he could come and work for me.' Chris, UpBeat Arts

'Seeing our participants as proud as punch performing in front of the students.' Bec, Interchange Gippsland

'Watching the kids spontaneously share their "rewards" at the end of our activity so that each child received "equal pay for equal work".' Alisha, Gippsland Centre Against Sexual Assault

What do you think is the most significant change that occurred because of the program?

'The growth in the students, they became mature, concerned, considerate people. Their whole physical demeanour changed - they grew into exceptional people.' Irene, Wonthaggi & District Historical Society

'Students and hopefully teachers feeling empowered to teach, be hands on with positive programs for the environment' Ewan, Phillip Island Nature Park

'Community networking' Lisa, Phillip Island Senior Citizens Club

'The kids knowing that they can be involved in things happening in their community.' Lisa, Bass Valley Landcare Network

'Awareness...' Chris, UpBeat Arts Therapy

'For Council, I believe the video will help to educate people and encourage them to do the right thing when it comes to cat containment.' Anthony, Bass Coast Shire Council

'The Interchange Band has been offered opportunities to perform.' Bec, Interchange Gippsland

'Increased confidence of the kids' Deb, West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority