

# Geelong 2021

## Kids as Catalysts

### 2021 Outcomes Evaluation Report

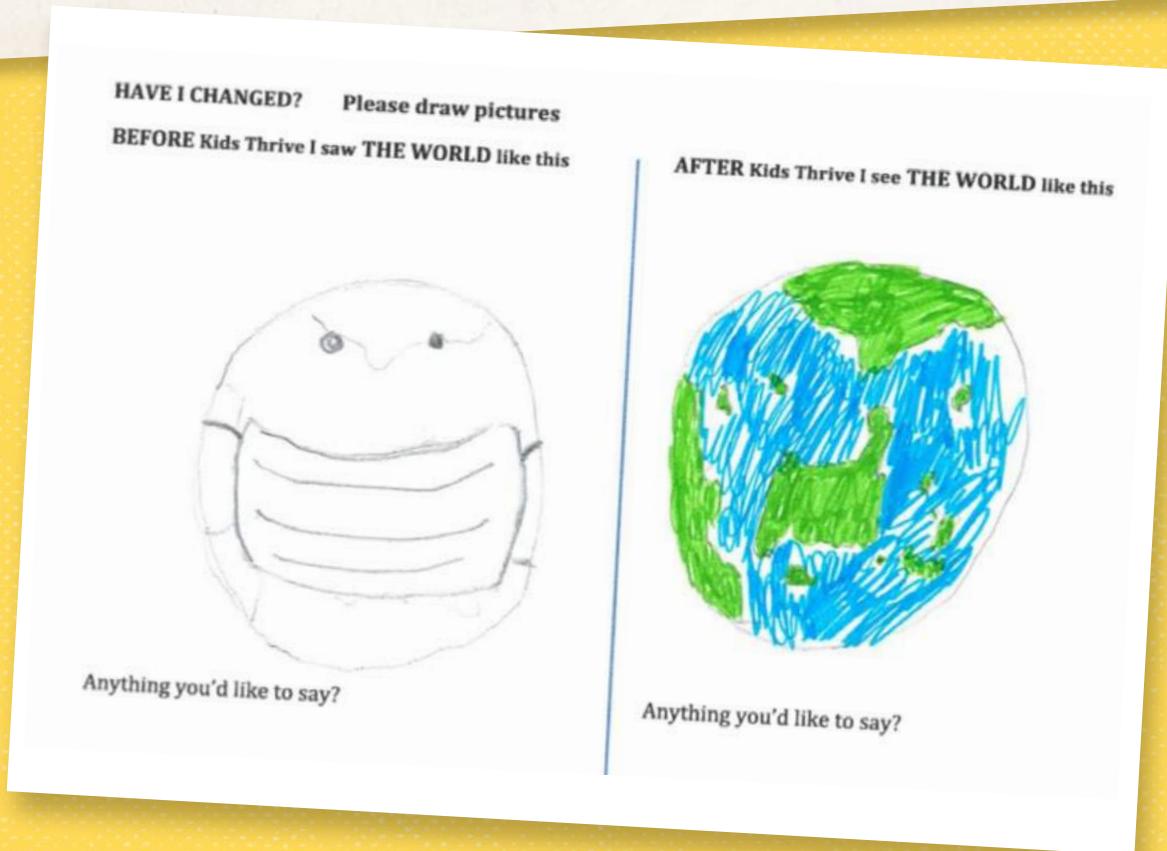
A creative learning program promoting student wellbeing and educational engagement through community involvement and child-led social action.



 Kids Thrive

## Introduction

This report presents a summative evaluation of the final year of the Kids Thrive 'Geelong Kids as Catalysts' program delivered in four upper primary campuses of Northern Bay College, Geelong, in 2021. The program trialled an online co-teaching model during the second year of the Covid-19 pandemic.



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.



## **Geelong Kids as Catalysts 2021**

### **Northern Bay College**

### **Outcomes Evaluation Report – Full Report**

#### **Introduction**

This report presents a summative evaluation of the Kids as Catalysts program provided to ten grade 6 class groups at the Wexford, Peacock, Tallis and Hendy Campuses of Northern Bay College, Geelong.

This program was core-funded by the Sidney Myer Trust and the William Buckland Foundation. Kids Thrive received funding from the Victorian Government Department of Education and Training's 'Strategic Schools Partnerships' Program, Federal Department of Social Services 'Inclusive Communities' Fund, W.C.F Thomas Trust, Geelong Community Foundation, the Anthony Costa Foundation, and Give Where you Live Foundation to deliver the Geelong Kids as Catalysts program during 2021.

#### **The Kids as Catalysts Program**

'Kids as Catalysts' is a six-month resilience and creative leadership program. It aims to ignite and skill children to become catalysts for positive change in their local communities. 'Kids as Catalysts' builds children's resilience, educational engagement, community connections and mental wellbeing, whilst engaging literacy, numeracy and teamwork skills. Kids as Catalysts is delivered in upper primary schools, through direct training and self-directed, action-based learning over two school terms. Each NBC campus has engaged with the program over 3 years to facilitate scaffolded learning of both students and teachers – building the school's capacity to continue delivering an embedded creative learning model which speaks directly to Victorian curriculum whilst building student educational engagement through community engagement, resilience, leadership, voice and agency.

2021 was the final year of Kids Thrive's involvement in program delivery. Teachers took responsibility for program delivery, supported by a suite of online videos and learning resources developed by Kids Thrive during the significant COVID-19 lockdowns of 2020 when most campuses were delivering remote learning and external parties were not allowed in schools. The aim was to ensure that the program could continue in 2021 regardless should COVID-19 lead to more lockdowns and lack of incursion capacity.

Over two terms of the program, students connected with their personal values; forged values-based teams; researched, identified and engaged local community groups as project partners; conceived, co-designed, planned and budgeted a series of small philanthropic projects to benefit their local communities; and wrote persuasive applications for funding. Students then pitched for funding and project support to panels

of school and community leaders, before leading the delivery of their community projects in partnership with their selected community organisations. Students managed project schedules, finances and documentation, supported by the school, community and the Kids Thrive team. The program culminated in a series of small Showcases – delivered remotely due to on-going COVID-19 restrictions - where students shared their project outcomes, challenges and achievements with each other and the Kids Thrive team.

Kids as Catalysts engages children in the later years of primary school and the early years of secondary school. This vital time in a child's development - known as the 'middle years' - is characterised by rapid emotional, physical, social and cognitive development. Kids as Catalysts closely matches the needs of children in this age group, which have been summarised as 'to have good self-esteem; belong, feel connected and supported; have increasing independence in a safe environment; be able to achieve, learn and feel competent; and be heard, participate, and be listened to' (Committee on Children and Young People, 2009:17). Promotion of educational engagement and personal resilience are key to supporting wellbeing at this time of transition; and factors promoting engagement and resilience are central to the program. These include developing individual attributes such as self-efficacy, social competency, and problem-solving skills; educational competencies including self-directed learning; and supportive relationships with family, caregivers, peers, teachers, and members of the broader community (Hunter, 2012; Luthar and Cicchetti, 2000).

A logic model is attached (Appendix 1), describing the theory of change underlying the Kids as Catalysts program. In summary, the intervention comprises an innovative, child-led social change program that empowers children to engage in and take the lead in social change activities. It is delivered by Kids Thrive facilitators in partnership with educators, community groups and children, and uses arts and creativity as a learning and educational engagement strategy. It explicitly:

- Builds links and relationships between children, schools, agencies and their community.
- Develops the skills of teachers and children to investigate and understand themselves, others and their community from a philanthropic/social action perspective.
- Inspires and equips children to lead change at a community level.

Program outputs include partnerships between children, schools and community organisations to co-design and deliver local philanthropic and social action projects. The project logic maps outcomes onto a socio-ecological framework at individual, interpersonal, community and societal levels. Individual level outcomes include increased self-esteem, self-confidence, educational engagement, resilience and expanded social networks for children; interpersonal outcomes include increased connectedness between children, teachers, schools and communities; at a community level, children become active participants in addressing local issues; and at a societal level, we expect to see improved cohesion and wellbeing with children better equipped to be contributing members of society.

The program has been delivered to over 36 Victorian schools since 2011.

This evaluation of Kids as Catalysts 2021 is based on teacher-observed data sets measuring demonstrated change in individual student competencies; students' self-evaluation of their sense of self and understanding of the world before and after the program; student reflections on their community and personal learning journeys; plus interviews with teachers, principals, community partners, and students. These demonstrate that students respond enthusiastically to the program, with schools noticing key improvements in children's personal, social and educational outcomes including creative thinking, leadership, personal agency, self-esteem and mental wellbeing. The evaluation also includes a simple pre-and post-test to understand the breadth of students' trusted community connections emerging from involvement in the program.

Kids as Catalysts aims to increase child and youth confidence, capacity to identify issues of importance to them and their local communities and build their capacity to take action to address these issues. It also aims to build students' resilience, self-esteem, social connections and sense of agency by:

- Using creativity to explore their personal values and to rehearse key social and community development skills
- Promoting social inclusiveness and community connectedness
- Encouraging community cooperation and participation
- Fostering awareness and understanding of community issues
- Enacting alternative, positive pathways for children and communities in environments with few perceived options
- Exploring creative approaches to transforming challenges and obstacles into opportunities for growth.

## **The Evaluation**

This evaluation identifies the impact of the Kids as Catalysts program in four primary school campuses of Northern Bay College, Geelong in 2021.

## **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 Kids as Catalysts program during 2021. 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**

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

1. To what extent have children, teachers and community members participated in Kids as Catalysts?
2. What has 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, and improved their educational engagement?
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 the school?
7. To what extent have children achieved age-appropriate level or higher across all domains?
8. 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 the principal
- Student Progress Reports - detailed reports completed by teachers for each child in their class detailing progress as a result of Kids as Catalysts
- 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 *Kids as Catalysts – Geelong in 2021?*

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

- 154 grade 6 students, including:
  - 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
  - 5 students with disabilities
  - 27 culturally and linguistically diverse students.
- 4 campuses of 1 multi-campus government school
- 1 Kids Thrive-alumni assembly presented for student by students
- 16 teachers and education support staff
- 1 school Principal / 4 Campus Principals / 4 Campus Assistant Principals
- 1 Kids Thrive Facilitators
- 27 local community organisations and volunteer groups (Appendix 3)
- 2604+ local community members:
  - 12 community panellists
  - 27 partnering in delivering students' community projects
  - 1747+ (approx.) engaged by and/or benefiting from students' community projects. (Appendix 3)

### 2. What has *Kids as Catalysts* delivered?

During 2021 Kids as Catalysts delivered:

- 57 student workshops
- 10 community engagement events
  - Four Community Partner Pitch Events
  - Four Student Pitch Events
  - Two Remote Student Showcases
- 34 philanthropic community action projects realised by students with community partners
- 4 steering committee meetings, including:
  - Campus Principals
  - Communities that Care Coordinator - representing local agencies, schools, community organisations and government departments
  - Kids Thrive Directors

- 5 working group and professional learning meetings, including:
  - Teachers
  - Kids Thrive Facilitator
  - Community Liaison Officer

**Media Reach:**

- 2148 social media engagements
- Social Media Reach of pages:
  - Facebook: 3,764 (+ 53.4%)
  - Instagram: 3,150 (+1.4k%)
- Total Reach:
  - Facebook: 433% increase in engagement
  - Instagram: 201% increase in engagement
  - LinkedIn: 32.54% increase in engagement
- Social Media Reach: Over 50,000 total post reach across platforms for 2021 thus far.
- Over 5.5 million audience for 2021 - including the Community Philanthropy Award and further media across Victoria including publications and radio

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

Teachers provided Student Progress Reports identifying their observed impact of Kids as Catalysts on each students' behaviour. The progress reports include five areas of relevance to this evaluation question. The progress reports indicate that:

- 73% of students demonstrated improved self-confidence as a result of participation in Kids as Catalysts;
- 78% demonstrated improved teamwork;
- 63% demonstrated improved empathy;
- 50% demonstrated improved respect;
- 36% demonstrated improved equity.

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

Student Progress Reports include seven dimensions of relevance to this evaluation question: willingness to participate, self-directed learning, perseverance, literacy and numeracy, and effective and cognitive educational engagement.

The Student Progress Reports indicate that:

- 60% of children showed improved willingness to participate in class through their

involvement in Kids as Catalysts;

- 54% of children demonstrated improvement in self-directed learning;
- 74% demonstrated improved perseverance;
- 53% demonstrated improved in literacy;
- 55% demonstrated improved numeracy;
- 37% demonstrated improved effective engagement (wanting to be in the classroom);
- 60% demonstrated improved cognitive engagement (applying learning and capabilities from this program to other activities).

It is important to note that 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.

The Student Progress Reports indicate that:

- 77% of children demonstrated improved understanding and practice of leadership skills;
- 81% demonstrated improved understanding and capacity to participate in community engagement.
- 63% demonstrated improved social awareness.

## **6. To what extent have children engaged with their community, and the community had a positive engagement with the school?**

Data shows Northern Bay College developed new or stronger links with:

- 27 local community groups
- 757+ family and community participants at celebratory events.
- 1747+ community members who were engaged by and/or benefited from student community projects.

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

## **7. To what extent have students achieved age-appropriate level or higher across all domains?**

Many students at Northern Bay College are identified as being at high risk of disengagement, and the developmental and educational capacities of a number of students have been assessed as approximately two years behind their peers at the beginning of Grade 6. Analysis of data from the Kids as Catalysts evaluation indicates the following changes in the percentage of students achieving age-appropriate levels or

higher (as assessed by their teachers) across all domains before and after the program:

	<b>Age-appropriate levels at Beginning</b>	<b>End</b>
<b>Social and Emotional Skills</b>		
• Self-confidence	56%	84%
• Empathy	70%	88%
• Teamwork	41%	81%
• Respect	73%	90%
• Equity	73%	82%
<b>Creative Learning Skills</b>		
• Perseverance	55%	85%
• Willingness to participate	60%	89%
• Self-directed learning	56%	78%
• Literacy skills	51%	72%
• Numeracy skills	56%	75%
• Effective engagement	71%	82%
• Cognitive engagement	65%	87%
<b>Leadership</b>		
• Leadership skills	52%	82%
• Community engagement	37%	77%
• Social awareness	68%	88%

## **8. To what extent have children built their community networks? (Appendix 4)**

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

- 30% increase in positive connections with other students at school;
- 55% increase in connections with kids outside school;
- 17% increase in family connections;
- 42% increase in trusted connections with adults at school;
- 18% increase in trusted connections with adults in the community.

## Summary of Evaluation Results in 2021

Question	Result 2021
1. To what extent have students, teachers, and community members participated in <i>Kids as Catalysts</i> ?	<p>154 students in grade 6 participated.</p> <p>16 teachers / education staff</p> <p>1 school principal / 4 campus principals/ 4 campus assistant principals</p> <p>27 community organisations</p> <p>2604+ community members engaged as project participants or event participants or were beneficiaries of student projects.</p>
2. What has Kids as Catalysts delivered?	<p>57 workshop sessions;</p> <p>10 community engagement events;</p> <p>34 community projects led by children.</p>
3. To what extent have students demonstrated growth in positive <b>social and emotional skills</b> ?	<p>73% increased confidence;</p> <p>78% improved teamwork;</p> <p>63% improved empathy;</p> <p>50% increased respect;</p> <p>36% increased equity.</p>
4. To what extent have students learnt and applied <b>creative learning</b> skills, and improved <b>educational engagement</b> ?	<p>60% improved willingness to participate;</p> <p>54% improved self-directed learning;</p> <p>74% greater persistence;</p> <p>53% improved literacy;</p> <p>55% improved numeracy;</p> <p>37% greater effective engagement;</p> <p>60% greater cognitive engagement.</p>
5. To what extent have students learnt and applied <b>leadership and community engagement</b> skills?	<p>77% improved leadership skills;</p> <p>81% improved community engagement;</p> <p>63% improved social awareness.</p>
6. To what extent has the <b>community</b> had a positive engagement with the school?	<p>27 local community groups;</p> <p>757+ family and community members at events (remote and/or in person);</p> <p>1747+ community members engaged with / benefiting from NBC student projects.</p>
7. To what extent have students achieved <b>age-appropriate levels</b> across all domains?	

	<b>2021</b>	
	Before	After
Confidence	56%	84%
Empathy	70%	88%
Teamwork	41%	81%
Respect for individual differences	73%	90%
Equity	73%	82%
Perseverance	55%	85%
Engagement / Willingness to participate	60%	89%
Self-directed learning	56%	78%
Literacy skills	51%	72%
Numeracy skills	56%	75%
Effective engagement	71%	82%
Cognitive engagement	65%	87%
Positive Leadership skills	52%	82%
Community engagement	37%	77%
Social awareness	68%	88%
<b>8. To what extent have students increased their trusted community networks?</b>	<b>41%</b> increase in positive connections with other students at school; <b>90%</b> increase in connections with kids outside school; <b>18%</b> increase in trusted connections with adults at school; <b>62%</b> increase in trusted connections with adults in the community; <b>22%</b> increase in positive family connections.	

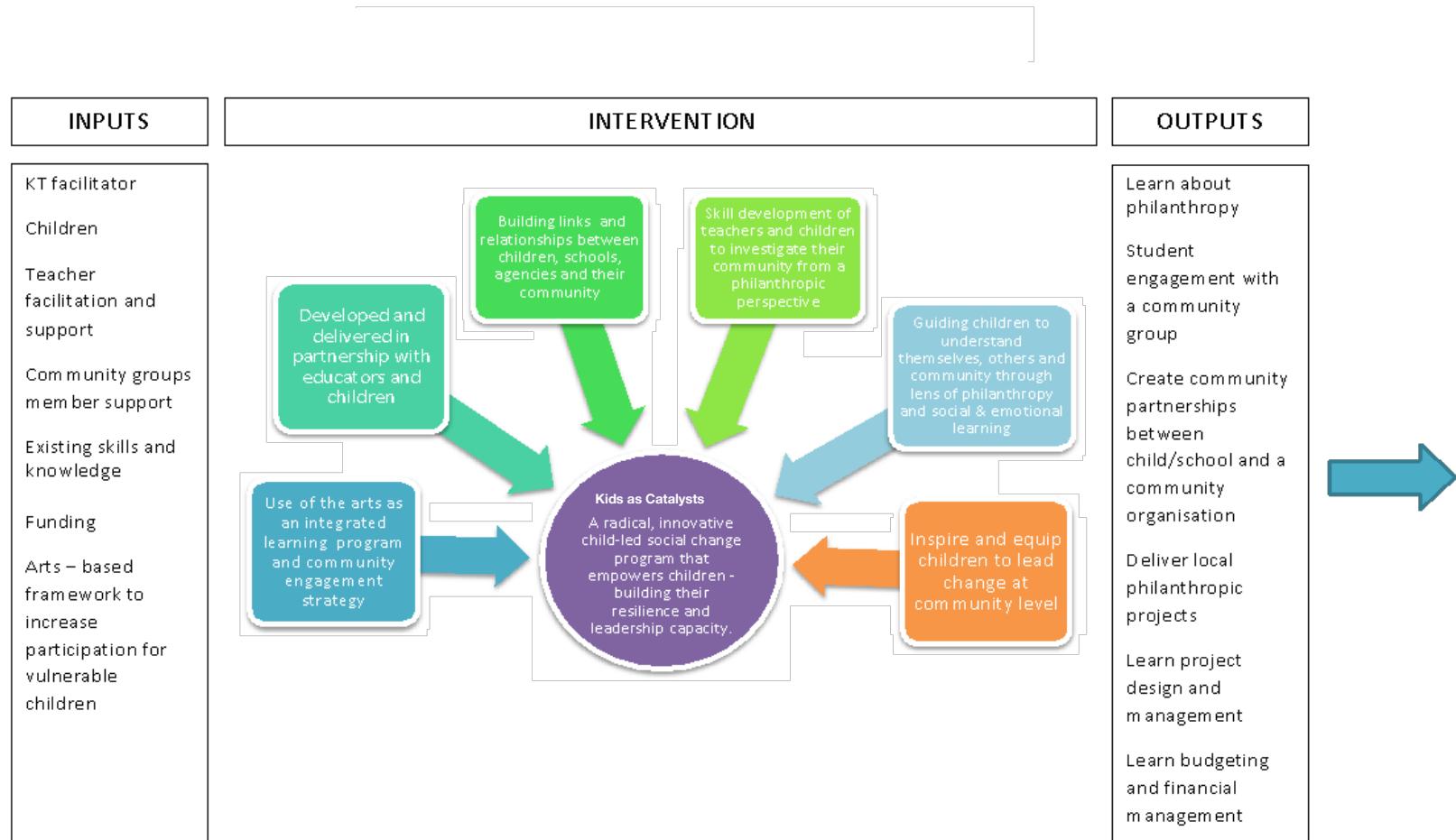
## CONCLUSION

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

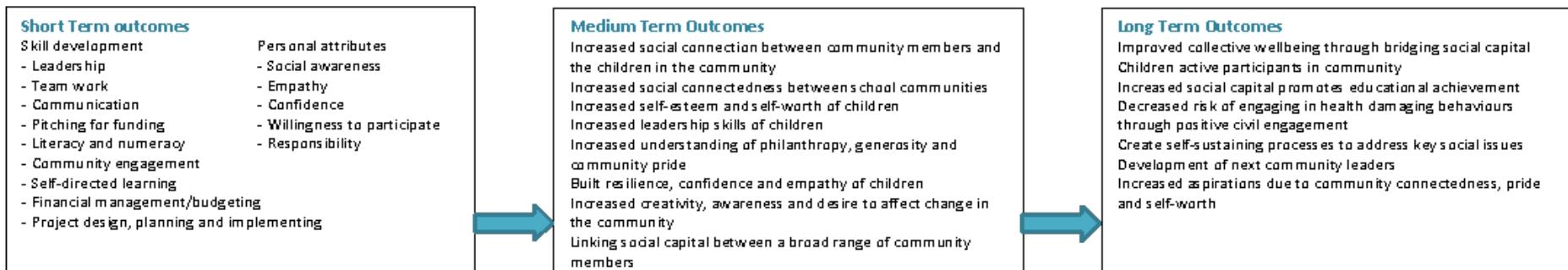
Kids as Catalysts builds children's resilience by significantly improving their: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Self-confidence</li><li>• Teamwork</li><li>• Empathy</li><li>• Self-directed learning</li><li>• Educational engagement</li><li>• Perseverance</li><li>• Literacy and numeracy</li><li>• Leadership skills</li><li>• Community engagement</li><li>• Social awareness</li></ul>	Kids as Catalysts also makes a significant contribution towards improved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Engagement of families with schools</li><li>• Connection between schools and local community groups</li><li>• Children's safe community networks</li></ul>	Kids as Catalysts also enhances educational engagement by improving children's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community Engagement</li><li>• Willingness to participate</li></ul>
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Kids as Catalysts is based on sound evidence of the value of creativity in engaging and educating children. Kids as Catalysts delivered a successful program in this multi-campus primary school in a significantly disadvantaged region of Victoria. The evidence from this evaluation indicates the program has improved children's educational engagement, learning skills and community capacities, built links between families, schools and community groups, and extended children's safe community networks. From these results, we can draw the conclusion that Kids as Catalysts contributes significantly to building children's resilience and educational engagement even during the COVID-19 pandemic challenges.

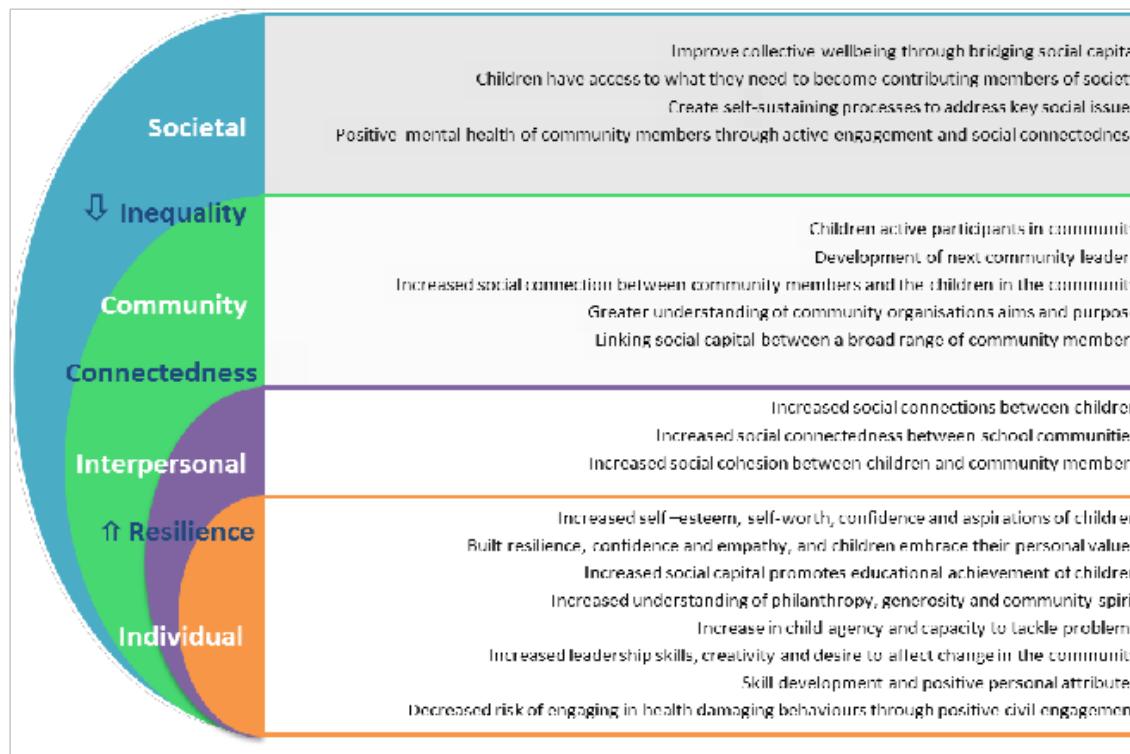
## APPENDIX 1: Kids as Catalysts Project Logic



## OUTCOMES

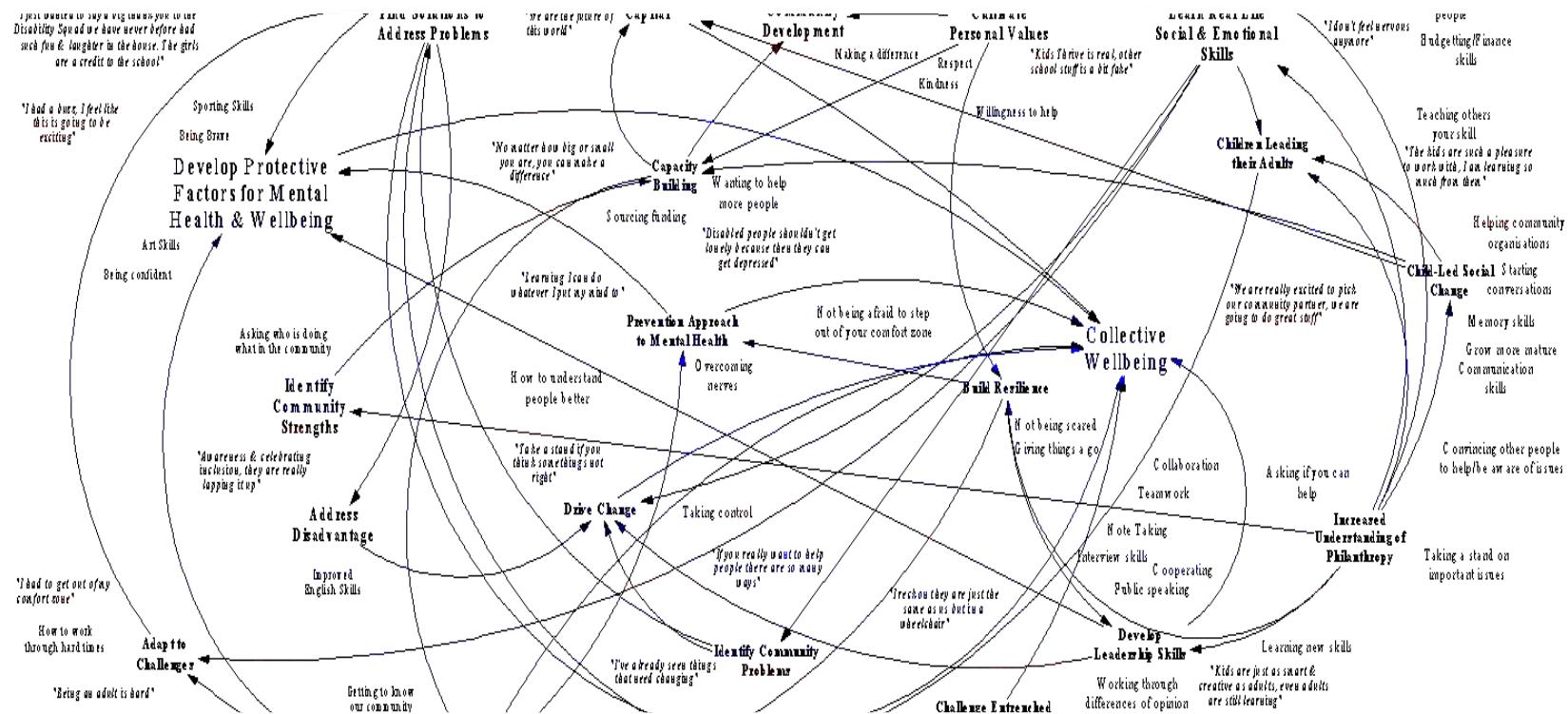


Kids as Catalysts outcomes mapped against the social-ecological model



## APPENDIX 2: Kids as Catalysts Causal Loop Map

### Connecting Program Objectives to Observed Program Outcomes



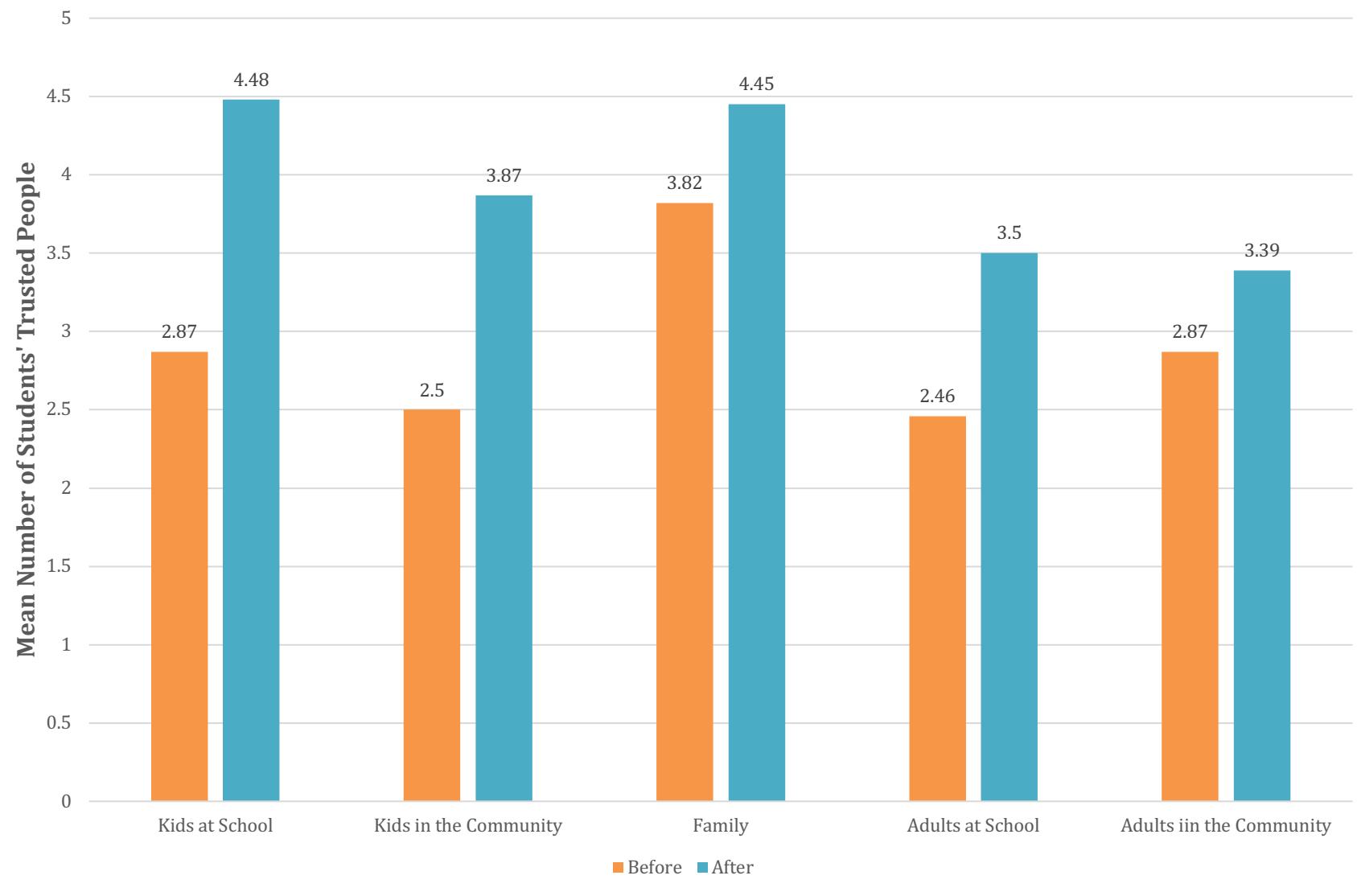
## APPENDIX 3: Kids as Catalysts 2021 – Northern Bay College Student Community Projects

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Community Partner</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Students' Concerns</b>
The Kids for Change	Lara Men's Shed	Making scones at school and taking them to Lara Men's Shed.	Not much community support for the men.
W.H.E.	Cloverdale Community Centre	Preparing care packs for an Afternoon Tea at a community centre.	Isolation of elderly community members.
Librei – Spectacular Spokes	NBC Hendy	Making special guards for sport wheelchairs.	To make sport inclusive for all abilities.
The Rainbow People	Geelong Rainbow Inc	Distribute posters around the school to raise awareness about equality.	People of different genders are not being treated equally.
Gender Squad	Women's Cricket	Outside sport with girls from 5-6 community and making a poster.	Getting more girls engaged in sports.
Wildlife Warriors	Animal Rescue	Buying resources that will help Caroline rescue animals.	Animals in shelters do not have enough supplies.
Clarity of Disabilities	Round-a-twist	Hold a fundraiser at school and then donate funds to Round-a-twist.	There is a new cool company but they don't have much funding.
Cultural Civility	Fiston Art	Painting bollards to represent different countries and backgrounds.	People of different backgrounds do not feel represented.
Fantastican Five	Cloverdale Community Centre	Helping kids (aged 4 and below - from EAL backgrounds) learn and keep them entertained using simple word games and books.	Providing support and entertainment for families to play.
Kids	Cloverdale Community Centre	Purchasing games, playing games with kids at the community centre	The community centre does not have that many games and kids get bored easily.

Animals	Mount Rothwell	Making padding for animal cages.	Improving animal welfare.
Cultural Diversity	Cloverdale Community Centre	Putting on a morning tea, sing/play an instrument to the over 70s at Cloverdale.	Isolation of elderly community members.
People with Disability	Norlane Community Centre	Hosting a responsible puppy ownership information session for P-2s and making puppy packs.	There are too many dogs in the shelters as people get puppies without knowing the responsibility.
Enviro 5	Cloverdale Community Centre	Painting bins to make them more appealing, planting trees	The outdoor area at the community centre needs T.L.C.
Gender Equality	Norlane Community Centre	Making filled baskets.	People do not feel supported and appreciated.
Kids	Geelong Mums	Hampers of socks, jocks, pyjamas and body wash.	Getting more kids engaged in sports.
Cultural Diversity	St Andrews Food Shed	Hamper and money to St Andrews Food Shed	Reducing isolation for people with all abilities.
Gender Equality	Humans in Geelong	Sanitary bags	A neglected garden needs T.L.C.
Animals	Cherished Pets	Snufflemats	Many pets are not being entertained enough.
Animal Advocates - Saving Sea Life	Queenscliff Marine Discovery Centre	Audit of rubbish in school yard, posters to help educate school community about impact of rubbish.	Our rubbish ends up in the ocean and is impacting marine life- causing pollution, disease and death.
Guardians of the Environment	Cloverdale Community Centre	Planting fruit trees and rejuvenating vegetable garden at Cloverdale Community Centre	Community Centre being able to provide fresh fruit and vegetables to community members and perhaps sell to community.

Cultural Kids	TSI support worker	Girls learning to make traditional dress. Boys learning to play yidaki {didgeridoo}.	Teaching indigenous and non-indigenous students at NBC indigenous customs to foster inclusion.
Girls in STEM	STEM teacher	Encouraging inclusion of girls in STEM - students involved in running STEM displays.	The decreasing numbers of girls participating in STEM programs.
Wellbeing Kids Corner	Our Place	Creating a well-being space for kids in the Early Learning Centre.	Kids don't have a well-being area that they can go to if they need.
Animal Warriors - Savers	Forever Friends	Making snuffle packs and kitten packs.	Helping abandoned animals in shelters.
Spoke Guard Warriors	Parallel Sports	Designing spoke guards for wheelchairs	To make sport inclusive for all abilities.
A Bench to call home	Lara Men's Shed	Building picnic tables for school.	Spending time and engaging with the elderly.
The EAL Homework Club	Lara Men's Shed	Supporting EAL education by purchasing equipment they need.	Giving support to our refugee students and help them with their education.
Geelong Kids	Geelong Mums	Sewing blankets for babies and kids.	Supporting mums and babies in need.
Animal Helpers - Wildlife	GAWS	Making toys to entertain the animals in the rescue shelter.	Helping to entertain animals at the Geelong Animals Shelter
Mangroves in the Water	Humans in Geelong	Saving the Mangroves.	An awareness of mangroves and importance.
Mural Makers	Wexford Refugee support program	Painting murals / bollards.	Helping to make our refugee students feel inclusive at school.
Parallel Sports	Parallel Sports	Making Wheelchair guards.	People with a disability don't receive much support to play sport.

## APPENDIX 4: Changes in Students' Trusted Social Networks 2021



## APPENDIX 5: Reach of Kids as Catalysts in Geelong 2021

<b>Role/Community Group</b>	<b>People Reached</b>
Teaching & Support Staff	16
Community Partners (confirmed)	27
Community Reach of Student Actions	1747
Students	57
Community Members at Community Information Night, Pitch, Showcase Assembly Event	757
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2604</b>

<b>Community Reach of Student Actions</b>	<b>People Reached</b>
Lara Men's Shed	12
Cloverdale Community Centre	7
NBC Hendy	10
Geelong Rainbow Inc	300
Women's Cricket	300
Animal Rescue	3
Round-a-twist	20
Fiston Art	100
Cloverdale Community Centre	3
Cloverdale Community Centre	50
Mount Rothwell	3
Cloverdale Community Centre	7
Norlane Community Centre	3
Cloverdale Community Centre	150
Norlane Community Centre	7
Geelong Mums	10
St Andrews Food Shed	12
Humans in Geelong	30
Cherished Pets	3
Queenscliff Marine Discovery Centre	300
Cloverdale Community Centre	15
TSI support worker	10
STEM teacher	30

Our Place	50
Forever Friend	3
Parallel Sports	10
Lara Men's Shed	3
Lara Men's Shed	30
Geelong Mums	7
GAWS	3
Humans in Geelong	3
Wexford Refugee support program	250
Parallel Sports	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1747</b>

## **APPENDIX 6: COMMUNITY PARTNER RESPONSES**

Geelong Kids as Catalysts Community Partners were sent an online survey at the end of the 2021 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 10 of the 27 community partners. The response rate was affected by disrupted access to community partners during the COVID-19 restrictions.

Of those who responded:

100% felt they received adequate support from Kids Thrive during the program.

70% indicated they would choose to be involved in the program again. Partners provided feedback regarding the importance of clear guidelines in terms of commitment and expectations of community partners.

100% of the community partners liked the opportunity to engage with local school children and seeing their increased level of engagement.

80% of the responding community partners mentioned COVID-19 and its effects of the program but that they managed to deal with. Their main criticism was that they were not able to meet the students face-to-face more often due to restrictions.

80% indicated that they loved the program despite the COVID-19 issues.

Everyone felt there was personal benefit for themselves in participating in the program.

Below is a selection of insights shared by community partners in response to survey questions:

### **1. What did you love and what did you learn as an educator?**

Learning something new! Sharing stories and old photographs while experiencing different school programs. I learnt not to expect or transpose my thoughts and ideas, but to listen and see how I could help and partner rather than lead.

Chance to work with lovely, switched on, passionate students that had an issue in mind that they wanted to help solve. I have learned through the couple of years that we have been involved that our world is in good hands, these kids are our future leaders.

Young people where enthusiastic, vibrant and enjoyable to work with once they got to know us.

Their [the students] excitement and willingness.

### **2. Was there a benefit to your organisation or group in being involved in the program?**

The opportunity to engage with local school children who have a real passion for the elderly in our community and who wanted to engage on a personal level. Even though the personal contact didn't happen, the people engaged at the community centre were thrilled to be asked for their story and shared some wonderful life experiences. I found this very rewarding and realised that this is another outreach for the well-being team to adopt.

Getting to know the local school community.

Working collaboratively with a small group of students who were passionate about our work. Opportunities to regularly engage for short periods of time with the students where we were able to engage in reflective listening and work towards a common goal.

The students were very clear on what they wanted to achieve and how they wanted to 'make a difference' - it was quite inspiring and their efforts (creation of a wellbeing space in the family centre) will be long lasting.

### **3. Did you perceive any benefits for the students involved?**

The passion of the students and the willingness to be a Catalysts for change at the community centre was very encouraging. The relationships that we formed will be long-lasting.

I loved seeing students take ownership of a program and especially developing all those 'soft' skills.

The more time you have face to face with the young people they become more confident in themselves.

Students built up their confidence.

### **4. What really worked in this year's program?**

The opportunity for students to take a more lead role in their learning.

It is great to see the students at that year level to be taking on a role of active citizenship. It acknowledges that we are now starting to identify the students as young adults and that they can start to play a more active role in the community. A program that is unique to them and recognizes them as leaders in the school.

This is a program with outcomes.

Getting to know the local school community.

### **5. What would you change about the program for the future?**

I think being slammed with COVID-19 in a Kids Thrive Program makes it hard to judge where improvements are needed. I think in light of the year we have had I was pretty happy with how the program ran from where I was looking.

Working with the elderly via Webex or Zoom was not as easy to organise as it sounded. It would have worked best with stories being exchanged or preferably, the students being able to come over to see them in person, but restrictions didn't allow that.

COVID-19 getting in the way so I couldn't come and see how the kids were progressing.

The workbooks helped to narrow down some broad ideas into a concrete goal. For there to be clear guidelines around the time commitment / level of involvement required.

This is not a reflection on the program but I personally would have liked to see the students at least once in person but lockdowns and restrictions didn't allow. The flexibility of online worked well for me but I still would have liked one face to face meeting or chance to watch the pitch as an example.

## **6. Tell us how supported you felt by the Kids Thrive team and the teachers?**

When I first came down the teachers were great. Informative and passionate, really care about the kids and their projects.

I genuinely loved the communication with the team and I would have been happy for more of it. The children were easy to understand and very polite in their requests which made it easier for me to coordinate my end.

I mostly connected through their teacher who was awesome at setting up online meetings and helped the students through the meetings. She always had the students well prepared and ready.

I felt very supported by the Kids Thrive team as there were regular communications between us.

Great working with the young people.

It's good for students to learn things outside and to build up their connections with other students in the community.

## **11. Anything else you would like to share?**

Things have obviously been hard with COVID-19. I'm not sure about the other community groups but if this happens again I would be happy to meet with the kids online to see their progress and answer any further questions that had arisen as meeting in person is a hard task these days.

Just a big thank you for the opportunity you gave the community centre and me to try something new and hopefully long lasting.

We would be happy to be involved and work with students again in the future... Working collaboratively and capturing student voice is a big part of our approach. This was a great example of 'living it in action' and i think was successful in breaking down some of the barriers between school and the early years.

My greatest admiration to the teachers who run this. Please don't get rid of this program. Such rich learning comes out of this.

## **APPENDIX 7: Student Insights**

### **My Discovery about Myself**

- That I'm brave enough to share my ideas.
- That now I am more confident speaking to someone I don't know. Better teamwork.
- That I can do more than I think I can.
- That I can work and I am important.
- When I get nervous I fight and can't look people in the eyes.
- I discovered that to stand up if someone says you can't play with me. I wouldn't get scared.
- How much help I can do if I try!
- That I work well with my friends.
- I am a reliable team member.
- I like helping people.
- I discovered that I can have a growth and positive mindset even though we keep having to postpone our action plan.
- I was more artistic than I thought.
- Ask for help when you need it.

### **My Discovery about my Community**

- People can help if you let them.
- There are more people like me.
- I can always depend on the people in my community.
- There are others that care about the wellbeing of others and the planet.
- My community can help a lot of kids to come to this school not feel different.
- That a lot of people care about animals.
- That they help people like we did for Kids Thrive but they do it because it makes them happy.
- There are a lot of people lacking the recognition they deserve.
- There are lots of people changing their community.

## **My Buzz about our Community Action**

- Helping I community and giving to the community.
- I really liked doing Kids Thrive because it made me think more about environment and also make a change in the community.
- I feel like a hero!
- What got me excited about my community action was that we had the chance to help the community.
- Helping people be more confident.
- A great thing about my community action is meeting my community action partners.
- Sharing the message.
- Helping people and seeing them smile.
- I was happy and more confident.

## **My Discovery about Learning**

- That you have to work hard to achieve something.
- People with disabilities aren't different from everyone else.
- Learning doesn't actually have to contain 'learning'.
- Never say you're not good at anything.
- That learning can be really fun. That it is not always about learning from books or videos.
- That it helps benefit what I can do and my abilities.
- No matter what you can always learn more.
- When I work with other people it helps make it more interesting.
- You can always learn it.
- That anything is possible if you try.
- The discovery I found was that you can help anyone despite your age.
- I am a good team player.
- That it is fun and it might not be good at the start but trust the process and you will eventually get there.
- I think I did great by giving it a try and not giving up also making a change around my community.
- I never thought I would work with people I never met before.

## **My Message to Future Catalysts**

- It's not easy being a Catalyst.
- Try your hardest & never give up.
- There are different ways to be a hero!
- Always believe in yourself and help others in our community.
- Some steps will be hard but at the end it will be all worth it.
- You can make a change.
- There is always going to be a community action partner out there that would love to work with you.
- If at first you don't succeed just try again. Then you'll succeed even if it's not perfect.
- Pick a topic to care about so you'll have lots of fun.
- Have a great time working with other people.
- Try this it might help your learning, speaking and team work.
- Kids Thrive is really fun and don't be scared to talk to new people.

## **APPENDIX 8: Students' Self-Evaluation Drawings**

### **How I saw MYSELF before and after Kids as Catalysts**

Email: [admin@kidsthrive.org.au](mailto:admin@kidsthrive.org.au)

Phone: +61 3 8256 9689

713 Turnbull-Woolamai Rd, Woolamai, 3995 VIC

ABN: 55 761 065 774

[www.kidsthrive.org.au](http://www.kidsthrive.org.au)

**HAVE I CHANGED? Please draw pictures**

**BEFORE Kids Thrive I saw MYSELF like this**



**AFTER Kids Thrive I see MYSELF like this**



**Anything you'd like to say?**

I was just doing my normal school work.

Kids Thrive

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**Anything you'd like to say?**

- I helped by calling Kaye and organising bunes to meet.
- I think I could be a community helper in my community.

**HAVE I CHANGED? Please draw pictures**

**BEFORE Kids Thrive I saw MYSELF like this**



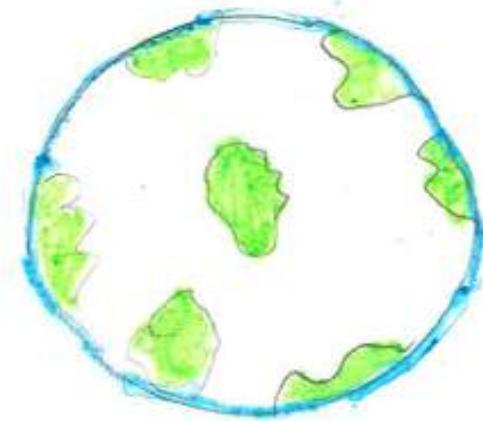
Anything you'd like to say?

I never new what catalyst  
meant.



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**AFTER Kids Thrive I see MYSELF like this**



Anything you'd like to say?

I want change the community  
and the world And be ana  
Philanthropise

**HAVE I CHANGED?** Please draw pictures

**BEFORE** Kids Thrive I saw MYSELF like this



Anything you'd like to say?

**AFTER** Kids Thrive I see MYSELF like this



Anything you'd like to say?



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**HAVE I CHANGED? Please draw pictures**

**BEFORE Kids Thrive I saw MYSELF like this**



Anything you'd like to say?

I liked to be alone and didn't talk much.

Kid Thrive

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**AFTER Kids Thrive I see MYSELF like this**



Anything you'd like to say?

I talk more and enjoy others company.

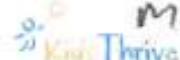
**HAVE I CHANGED? Please draw pictures**

**BEFORE** Kids Thrive I saw MYSELF like this



Anything you'd like to say?

I feel like I should  
make a positive  
affect!



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**AFTER** Kids Thrive I see MYSELF like this

I feel proud  
to be a  
hero!



Anything you'd like to say?

**HAVE I CHANGED? Please draw pictures**

**BEFORE** Kids Thrive I saw **MYSELF** like this

\*Public speaking before



**AFTER** Kids Thrive I see **MYSELF** like this

\*Public Speaking after



Anything you'd like to say?



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Anything you'd like to say?

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**AFTER** Kids Thrive I see **MYSELF** like this



Anything you'd like to say?

## **APPENDIX 9: Students' Self-Evaluation Drawings**

### **How I saw the WORLD before and after Kids as Catalysts**

**HAVE I CHANGED? Please draw pictures**

**BEFORE** Kids Thrive I saw THE WORLD like this



Anything you'd like to say?

**AFTER** Kids Thrive I see THE WORLD like this



Anything you'd like to say?



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Phone: +61 3 8256 9689

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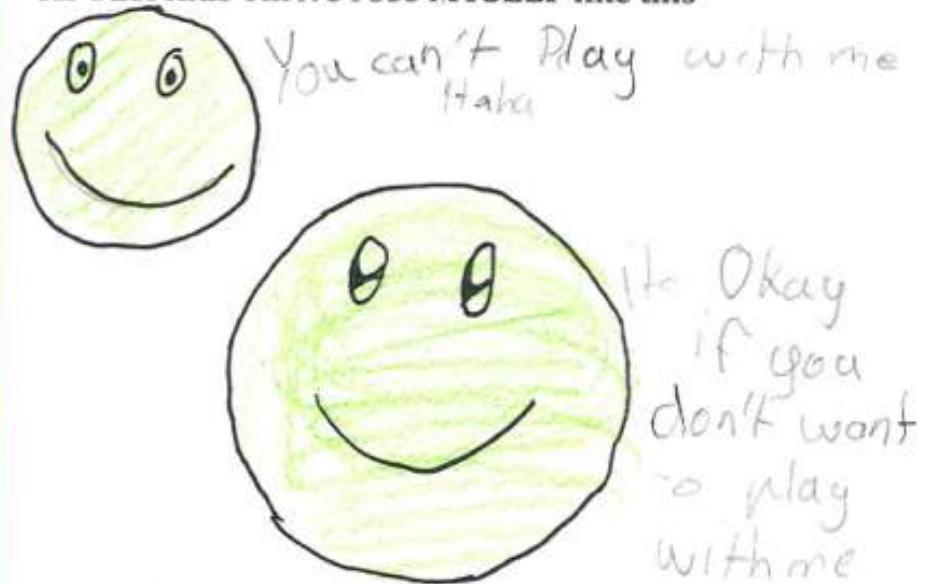
ABN: 55 761 065 774

[www.kidsthrive.org.au](http://www.kidsthrive.org.au)

**HAVE I CHANGED?** Please draw pictures  
world  
**BEFORE** Kids Thrive I saw **MYSELF** like this



**AFTER** Kids Thrive I see **MYSELF** like this



Anything you'd like to say?

I saw my self as being sad when  
someone would say no to me.  


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Anything you'd like to say?

The why I changed was with standing  
up and not being sad after someo  
e would - say you can't play  
with me;

**HAVE I CHANGED? Please draw pictures**

**BEFORE** Kids Thrive I saw THE WORLD like this



**AFTER** Kids Thrive I see THE WORLD like this



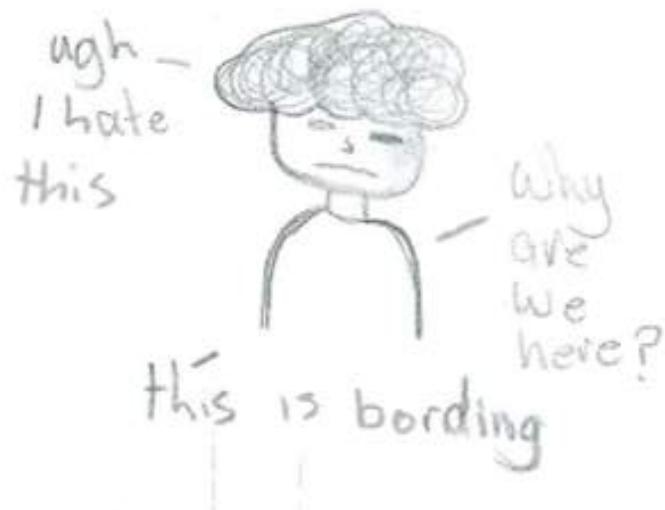
Anything you'd like to say?

People think that their opinions only matter so the world would look just & except it.  
~~don't~~ ~~Kid Thrive~~ dull

Anything you'd like to say?

**HAVE I CHANGED? Please draw pictures**

**BEFORE** Kids Thrive I saw **MYSELF** like this



Anything you'd like to say?



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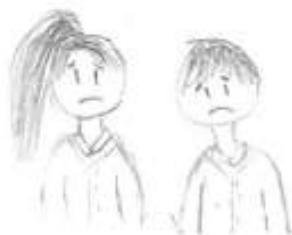
**AFTER** Kids Thrive I see **MYSELF** like this



Anything you'd like to say?

. HAVE I CHANGED? Please draw pictures

BEFORE Kids Thrive I saw THE WORLD like this



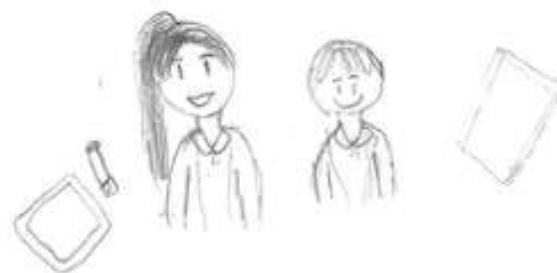
Learning is not fun without good equipment.

Anything you'd like to say?

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AFTER Kids Thrive I see THE WORLD like this



We could fundraise, buy equipment and donate to make them happier.

Anything you'd like to say?

**HAVE I CHANGED? Please draw pictures**

**BEFORE** Kids Thrive I saw THE WORLD like this



**AFTER** Kids Thrive I see THE WORLD like this



Anything you'd like to say?

Anything you'd like to say?



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**HAVE I CHANGED? Please draw pictures**

**BEFORE** Kids Thrive I saw THE WORLD like this



%

Anything you'd like to say?

I used to see the world  
like this.

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**AFTER** Kids Thrive I see THE WORLD like this



%

Anything you'd like to say?

But if we can encourage more  
girls to do STEM we can  
make a difference.