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***** MEDIA RELEASE *****

Banyule Kids Thrive: Song-writing for Social Change

'I've learnt how to meet someone new and speak to them, and make new friends, and not be scared.' Grade 3 student, St Pius X Primary School

Over 70 grade one to four students from three primary schools in the City of Banyule will gather for a huge community concert as part of **Kids Thrive's** ground-breaking arts and cultural development program **Banyule Kids Thrive**. Students from **St Pius X Primary School** in West Heidelberg, and **Charles La Trobe College – Olympic Village**, West Heidelberg and **Macleod** campuses will join musicians, artists, their teachers, families and the broader community for a raucous morning of music and song on **22 October 2014** from **10.30 to 12.30pm** at **Charles La Trobe P-12 College, Macleod West**.

The culmination of work by the students throughout the school year, the concert will feature students performing songs they have co-written, drawn from their work around exploring emotions and feelings, friendship, shyness, courage, belonging and isolation.

The concert has been developed by students in collaboration with **Kids Thrive** lead artist - composer and musician **Andrea Rieniets**; Children's Support Worker **Deborah Sonenberg**; choreographer **Alex Harrison**; set and costume designer **Katherine Branch**; and animator **Sal Cooper**. The celebration aims to build a sense of community and broader cultural conversation between students, families, teachers and community leaders in the Banyule Region. The celebration will also include babies and their grown-ups from Kids Thrive's West Heidelberg-based **Baby Choir** program.

Banyule Kids Thrive engages with children aged six to ten, their extended family networks and leading cultural development artists, teachers and family support professionals to support children in vulnerable communities to strengthen social and emotional skills to carve out alternative pathways to conflict and violence. Developed and delivered by arts and community cultural development organisation **Kids Thrive**, and running in Banyule for four years, the program's long-term aim is to grow a generation of children with the understanding, skills and ability to communicate and collaborate positively.

The program also provides professional development for teachers and support workers in using arts skills for social and emotional learning and employing 'Calmer Classroom' practices for working with traumatised children.

Kids Thrive is Melbourne's leading arts and community development organisation committed to child-led community change. We partner artists with specialists in children's education, health, welfare and social justice, to design and deliver cross-sector programs in schools and other safe and supportive, child-focused community settings throughout Victoria, so that children's views and experience can be represented in their communities.

Details: 22 October 2014 from **10.30 to 12.30pm** at **Charles La Trobe P-12 College, Cnr Waiora & Kingsbury Drive, Macleod West**

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