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NEWS

Aug 22 2018

Environment and kids thrive

by SIMON RUPPERT



Hands-on: Years 4 and 6 students planted trees at Benalla P-12 College's Faithful St Campus last Thursday as part of the Kids-Thrive program.

Benalla P-12 Years 4 and 6 students recently planted 100 trees to celebrate National Schools Tree Day, fulfil their curriculum requirements and improve the environment at the Faithful St Campus.



Despite the official National Schools Tree Day being held on July 27, Benalla P-12 environment co-ordinator Pip Rowe and her Year 6 Kids-Thrive students decided to do their bit for the environment a few weeks later.

As part of the Kids-Thrive program students are required to come up with a community event, pitch the idea to teachers and then run that event.

They decided on tree planting as it allowed them to get some of the younger students involved which also addresses leadership skills which are a goal of the Kids-Thrive program.

45m

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Ms Rowe said the tree planting was done in collaboration with Planet Ark Environmental Foundation.

“The Year 6 students were keen to do something for our environment and our native animals so they connected with me as I’m the environment co-ordinator at P-12,” she said.

“We’ve been getting a little wetlands happening at the school and the kids decided that they would like to invite some Year 4 students over from the Waller St Campus.

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4m 44s

Face to Face: Jennifer Morgan Greenpeace

“So the students organised the event, helped cook a barbecue and then went out in groups with the younger kids to do some planting.”

The Year 6 students had previously selected a range of native trees to plant with a focus on what would best suit the wetland and also create a habitat for native animals.

“They chose some great local trees, perfect for the environment in this part of Victoria,” Ms Rowe said.

“There are some eucalyptus and some wattle, for example. They will encourage some native birds to the area.

“Last week with a different group of students we had planted some shrubs and the Hands On Learning students had previously put in a dry-rock creek.

“The wetland is looking great and it’s nice to see some of the students making the most of it at playtime.”

The tree planting that the Kids-Thrive students did last Thursday not only satisfied elements of that program for the Year 6 students, it also created a connection for the Year 4 students who will be attending the Faithful St campus next year.

“The Year 4 kids were very excited,” Ms Rowe said.

“We’ll continue to add to this wetland area at Faithful St so the current Year 4 kids, and many others, will be involved with it in their future education.

“The younger students took a lot from the project and when I asked them at the end of the day why it was important to plant trees they gave me a range of different, but correct, answers.

“Some said it was to make the school look nicer, some said it was about clean air, some said it was great for the animals, for example.

“So it was a really effective learning experience for both year groups.”

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