

Term 1 Week 4 – 26 February 2014

Distributed weekly on Wednesday

Term 1

30th Jan – 4th Apr

9 week, 2 days

1 public holiday – Labour Day

1 pupil free day – Restorative Practice Training Day 2/2

To Be Confirmed

Cycle and room excursions if conducted and other events if the need arises

February

14th Friday bluearth program commences fortnightly

March

10th Monday – Public Holiday - Labour Day

11th Tuesday – Pupil Free Day – Staff Training Restorative Practice – Day 2/2

12th Wednesday – Cycle 2&3 Hockey Road Show - am

19th Wednesday – BBQ 5pm & AGM 6.30pm (To Be Confirmed)

21st Friday – World Harmony Day

24th – April 3rd – Cycle 2&3 Parent teacher interviews. Room schedules to be communicated prior to this date

April

4th Friday – End of term 2.15 finish

Term 2

22nd April – 27th June

10 weeks

2 public holidays – ANZAC Day, Queen's Birthday

1 pupil free day – Report Writing

April

25th Friday – Public Holiday - ANZAC Day

28th Monday – Cycle 3 Cross Country

From the Principal

On Monday night I attended the St Joseph's parent session on resiliency with presenter Jo Lange. Jo has been a teacher, educator and presenter for over 30 years and worked in a diverse range of settings. With her permission I will highlight the main points from her talk for those that were unable to attend.

Interestingly she specifically identified Montessori as a model that works most effectively to assist children to become independent and resilient but the theme of her presentation was that parents need to model behaviour/boundaries and support the child. Her overwhelming message was that parents need to talk to teachers as whilst parents know their children as individuals, teachers know the children in groups. Children need to become independent to become resilient.

The three factors for healthy, happy children.

- High warmth
- Low hostility
- Firm boundaries

Jo Lange's messages – what can we do?

- Lows need to be built into kid's lives so that they can experience the bad bits to appreciate the good. Don't prevent them from experiencing negatives because this is how they prepare for independent life.
- It's hard to see our kids doing it hard but don't enable and rescue as it doesn't help them get through

life. It hurts to see our kids left out, not get the awards etc. Our instinct is to protect our kids and that's OK but the how is important.

- They need to experience loss so that they can deal with life.
- They need to experience boredom.
- We are making things too easy for our children by always being there for our kids. Give them some safe distance to enable experiences. Make them come to you.
- Optimistic thinking isn't always thinking life will be good, because it won't. An optimist is a realist but they don't find the positive in everything.
- Genetics and environment influence resiliency.
- We need to stop (us and children) using pessimistic and catastrophizing language. Challenge this thinking "I can see right now that you are upset/not enjoying this" but don't buy into the disaster thinking.
- From experience of small, harder events/things they'll become stronger over time.
- Children need a life bank to draw from when things get tough.

- Children are being protected from negative events and feelings by creating a risk free environment but life isn't risk free.
- Everyone one gets a prize (pass the parcel, siblings getting birthday presents) is creating a culture of "no one can miss out".
- Competition is ok, aim for personal bests as not everyone can be a winner but personal bests influence self-esteem.
- Self-esteem isn't created by being told you're fantastic. Self-esteem is created by realistic conversations.
- Encourage "I can" statements with children to identify individual strengths.
- In life the majority of people don't win the awards/rich/powerful etc. but therefore being left out or not winning is powerful.
- Winning all the time or no risk creates an egocentric way of thinking. It might not be fair but it is what it is.
- Parent need to show children we are their safe, calm port in the storm. Don't buy into catastrophe. Be calm; if we are worried, so will they. Model good resilience.
- Don't dismiss feelings. Instead acknowledge how a child is feeling. Children need to state their own truth.
- Acknowledge your child's point of view and then state the limit/boundary/rule.
- Bullying is malicious, intentional, aim is to hurt and target specific people.
- Parents are becoming anxious about their child's anxiety. This can be verbal or through body language.
- We are the era of the "over hurried" child. They need to relax after school, less screens, chill, do what they love, get outside and play.
- Hands off helping – create independence. A child can't be resilient when an adult is doing everything for you.
- Telling children they are fantastic is undone by doing everything for the child. If people fix your mistakes you don't learn anything.
- Don't go to your children when they need something – let children develop intuitiveness by coming to adults.
- Children need to practise skills at home to be able to use them in life.
- When we do things for kids we tell them that we don't think they are competent.
- For a start, let them carry their own bag so that they can see their own strength and build it. Pack their own bag, get notes signed. If you do it for them they don't even know what's in their bag. We see children disconnect when adults intervene.
- Break overwhelming tasks into "do-able" chunks. Short, sharp shots of success.
- Stop telling children – ask or make a statement of fact/acknowledgement.
- Acknowledge the feelings but don't over immerse in the problem. Move onto problem solving to avoid over dramatizing.
- Children need to learn to stand up for themselves. Rehearse responses to triggers in a safe place.
- Ask "what can I do to help you help yourself to get better: read, cuddle, footy, walk, etc." Offer strategies to children to self-regulate.
- When adults step into children's problems the children don't know how to moderate the problem when adults aren't around.
- Don't get angry over everything (parking spots, items on tv etc). This creates anxiety in children and us. Make a decision to let things go/walk away. Pick your battles – don't fight everything in life.

It was fast paced, informative, and at times, humorous information. I hope you find some gems from the information above. I appreciated that Kitty, Principal of St J's offered this opportunity to us also – just as we have opened up the restorative practice session tonight. Both schools are committed to supporting parents and children in Beechworth. We are not schools in competition. Both offer very different programs based on different pedagogy – but what we have in common is a fundamental desire to help children and families become the best that they can.

I walked away feeling empowered as a parent, and as a Montessori educator satisfied that our pedagogy supports the social, emotional, intellectual and physical development of the child. This year our focus will be to help parents understand our philosophy, teaching and learning more and to support them in their role of bringing up a Montessori child. I unabashedly support Montessori education as I have been a teacher in several states and a range of school types and I believe that this is the most effective pedagogy I have worked with. I know that the staff are strongly supportive of Montessori philosophy. I also believe that the families that support Montessori education and this school would want me to be an advocate of our school and philosophy.

Kind regards, Heather

Restorative Practice Parent Session

Due to the number of attendees, this parent education session has been moved to the Old Priory in the Recreation Room, down stairs. Enter the building, go down stairs and you will find the room.

If you haven't RSVP'd and would like to attend, please contact Heather asap. This is a fantastic opportunity to become informed about a method to help your family and social relationships and support your child. The school is subsidising the cost of this – usually it would be substantially more. We sincerely hope that you will be able to support this initiative.
Tonight – 7-9pm. Old Priory Recreation Room

General News

School nurse will be here on Thursday to see the Prep students.

Wanted

Booster seats – please let the office know if you have one that you would like to donate to the school.

Help requested

Rob Holden is about to create a bike path in the Ruby Room outside area. If you would like to help him, please give him a call on 0417 428 900.

Cycle 2 News

Across both rooms

Camps and Excursions:

Thank you to all parents who found the time to complete the camp and excursion questionnaire last year. After carefully considering your responses, surveying other Montessori schools, and taking into consideration factors such as suitable camps and cost, it was been decided that a camps program is only feasible for the Cycle 3 program. Alternatively the Cycle 2 program will run excursions and incursions each term to help enrich and support the curriculum of each term, or take advantage of travelling opportunities as they arise.

The majority of survey responses supported incursions and excursions rather than camps for children aged 6-9 years. One of our major difficulties is in finding suitable established camp sites that are supportive of a Montessori program, cater for our age group through the provision of facilities and activities and accept non-government schools. The school has previously heavily subsidised the camps program but due to the change of the Federal government, a new funding agreement at the State and Federal level and the new Federal Education Act we are in a year of funding uncertainty – we do not have a clear picture of future funding and do not wish to increase school fees substantially to cover this uncertainty.

As such two incursions will be occurring the following weeks. Marilyn Webster, a local cheese maker, has generously reduced her rates to spend an afternoon with each of the Cycle 2 rooms in order for all students to experience making a soft cheese. Then a travelling company, 'Reptile Encounters' will visit, with the theme being insects.

Moonstone

Botany: Commencing with the Timeline of the Evolution of Plants, from algae to angiosperms (flowering plants), students are now learning the functions and parts of the flower. We have also practised how to ask an adult before picking a flower.

We are learning the parts of the stamen.

Art: As part of the 'Getting to know each other' activities students have completed a self-portrait inspired by the line work and patterns of artist Paul Klee and the use of personal

symbols by the artist Freda Kahlo. The portraits complement the writing activity All About Me or Bio Poem. This week we discussed Early Cave Art, its subject matter and how the images might have been created.

Outside we sketched our immediate environment using charcoal and graphite pencil

Third Great Story: In small groups we are learning research skills to find out more about the people and animals that lived during the Ice Age. We are also listening and responding to creation myths from different



cultures around the world commencing with The Turtle and the Island explaining how the island of Papua New Guinea came to be.

Cooking Theme: Healthy home cooked food for the lunchbox. On the menu so far – vegetable rice paper rolls and savoury muffins. Yummy!

Turquoise

ART: As per the national curriculum, the children are required to study a component of art history. Having already discussed Michelangelo, last week we focused on yet another Renaissance artist, Leonardo da Vinci. The children love hearing the stories of the life of the artists as we attempt to travel back in time to imagine the world at the time the artist lived. Among his many accomplishments and achievements, Leonardo was one the first artists to use perspective in his paintings. As such, the children completed a lesson on one point perspective - the results of which will soon be displayed in the corridor, so keep an eye out!

FISH: Many thanks to the tireless efforts (and dogged persistence) of Colin Bowey who finally overcame the challenges of the fish tank filter so that we could finally get fish. The children were most excited to find fish in the tank on Monday morning and they are a welcome addition to our room. Montessori supported the inclusion of animals in the classroom to enhance the opportunities for the children to learn responsibility, empathy and compassion for other living things, a respect for life and the natural development of things.

EUROPE: The children are learning a myriad of facts about Europe. As individual they are choosing European countries to research and present their finding, as a class we are endeavouring to learn the names of as many European countries as possible, identify flags, name capitals, and recognise famous landmarks etc. Sample questions you may like to ask/discuss with your child....In which city is the Eiffel tower? Westminster Palace? Arche de Triumph? Winter palace? Which country is famous for bull fighting? Lego? Chocolate? What is the capital of Germany? United Kingdom? Italy? France etc (the list could go one and on).

COOKING: As you may recall, the aim of the cooking program this term is to have children experience the tastes and flavours from different countries across Europe. Last week's country of choice was France. The children enjoyed croissants. Instead of baking the croissants (even the most experience of home cooks fear making the pastry for croissants!) the children set up a French restaurant where they were required to make a menu, take orders, complete their orders and serve their dish to the customers – much merriment had by all!

HISTORY: following the Third great Story – The Coming of Man, the children have had lessons regarding the 'time line of life' and the common needs of man. Children were required to order the timeline according to the knowledge of life at the time, from the Paleolithic Period to Modern Day. Each week they focus on one aspect of the time line and how it changes. For example, this week the children looked at shelter across the timeline – the results of which can be seen displayed on a window within the room.

Cycle 3 News

National Young Leaders day

On Monday the 24th, Indigo and I went to the National Young Leaders Day in Melbourne. We got on a bus a 5.00AM with other students from the Indigo shire and drove to Melbourne. The bus pulled up next to DFO in South Wharf, we got off and walked inside. Then we went into a huge theatre with a stage and thousands of seats.

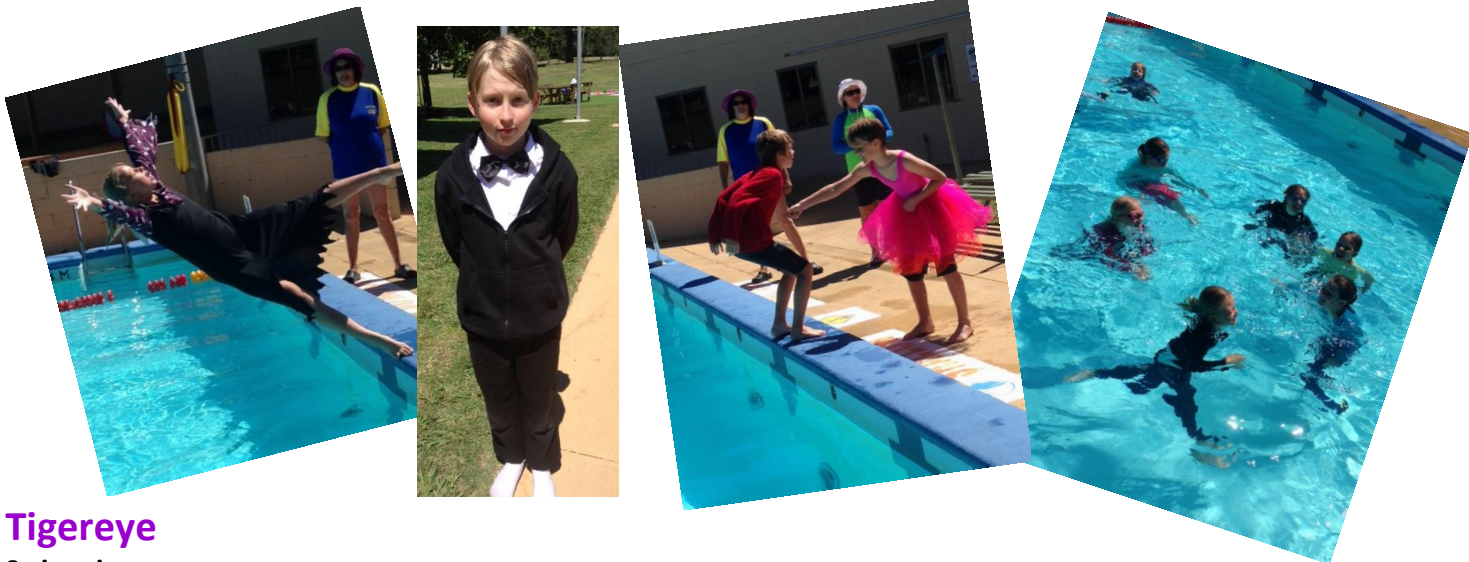
First up was the Freestyle Dance Academy; they did an amazing hip-hop dance. After that the MC came on stage and announced the first speaker, Mike Martin. He talked about leadership, empathy, fairness and the environment. His motto was "Nothing great, cool or long-lasting ever starts out that way". The next speaker was John Marsden (my favourite.) He spoke about language and how you can do anything with it. His saying was "Your own voice is more powerful than any old saying". Then there was Daniel Flynn he started the brand 'thankyou water'. He told his story and what happened with his 'thankyou water' brand. His saying was "always do something with a why". Then there was Jess Fox, she is an Olympic kayaker. She told us how she went to the Olympics. Her saying was "You don't need a badge or a title to be a leader". Lucky last was Kevin Sheedy, his talk was about happiness and his career as a football coach and a player. His Motto was "Life is a gift from your parents, enjoy it".

We had lunch and snack in between all the speeches. After all of that we drove home. I got home at 7.30, I was exhausted. My day was great fun I am glad I get to go next year.

By Eadie Pfahlert

Across both rooms

Charlotte, dramatic entry into the pool , Crazy diving Taj, Tas and Elias diving competition, Survival swim



Tigereye

Swimming program

Our five afternoons of swimming with Marion at the Beechworth pool were most enjoyable and it was terrific to see how students improved throughout the week with their swimming skills and their overall confidence in the water. We ended our week with a crazy diving competition which saw some incredible outfits and dramatic performances.

Grammar- Sentence Analysis

This week, the Year 4s had a lesson on sentence analysis. Sentence analysis is really a step up from parts of speech exercises where children break sentences into the different parts of speech. In sentence analysis we consider the crucial role that verbs (or 'predicates') play in a sentence. Students use the sentence analysis material to identify the predicate (action) in the sentence and who is receiving the action (the subject). From there we move on to more complex sentences involving objects, indirect objects and/or several subjects or actions. I find that students enjoy these activities and that they especially enjoy inventing new and entertaining sentences by changing around the order of words.

Geography- The hydrosphere

This term in Geography we are exploring the hydrosphere. Students have been using the pin maps to locate all the oceans of the world as well as the major seas, lakes and rivers. We have also been revising our knowledge of the water cycle and exploring oceans in more detail. Students are now beginning some project work where they will explore an aspect of the hydrosphere in more detail.

Topaz

Garden landscaping: We have a group of enthusiastic gardeners who are keen to continue landscaping outside our classroom, now that the weather is cooling. They are currently pricing and ordering bulbs for a bulb garden. If any families have excess bulbs could they please send them in to Tas and Alex in the Topaz room. They will also begin raking our playground to remove sticks and stones in readiness for top soil and lawn seeding. If anyone has spare time on a Wednesday from 11.00 – 12.00 to supervise could they please send me an email or call the school. Thanks

Our kitchen has become a mini **construction** site as the different bridges, being made from balsa wood, wire and twine, take shape. Students have researched their bridges and chosen their own designs and are realizing that nothing quite goes to plan, but there is always a solution!

In **History** we are focusing on the Fundamental Needs of Humans; Material needs: nutrition, clothing, shelter, communication, transport, and defense, and Spiritual Needs: art, philosophy and social acceptance. This study has generated many interesting discussions especially concerning how each of the material needs overlaps into the spiritual needs. We are currently focusing on clothing and have found that the early human's discovery of how to use bone needles to sew clothes, assisted humans to populate wider areas of the earth. We are also studying different ways clothes are made from plants, animals and minerals. Students will have the opportunity to make a weaving and try sewing and embroidery. On Friday we will have a day to dress up in clothing from different times, so if students have any suitable clothing at home please remind them to bring it in.

To answer the question: **How does Montessori and our school cater for active boys?** Firstly, read above and you will see that indeed the curriculum caters for a variety of different skills for both boys and girls kinesthetically. (Half our engineers are girls). Active students also have the benefit of:

- freedom of movement, being able to move around the classroom as needed
- freedom to move to different tables to work either alone or in groups of their choice
- working with a wide range of materials that allow them to experience concepts using their senses
- choice of lessons and project work that follow their interests and cater for social needs.

Having spent last year at a great school, nonetheless a school where students could not leave their seats without permission, were all doing the same subject at the same time with the only materials being their laptop, I see a much more productive and peaceful learning environment here. Energy is used at the student's rate and therefore does not boil over into the playground.

Terie

Montessori Matters

Articles and information in this section may not necessarily be Montessori philosophy but the concepts support the Montessori child and parents of a Montessori child

[An Open Letter To New Elementary Parents](#) by [John Snyder](#)

(the equivalent level in Australia is Cycle 2 or children aged from approx 6-9 years)

Soon enough our early elementary classrooms will be filling once again with children excited to begin the new school year. Among the happy faces will be those of the youngest children, those who are making the leap into the second plane of development and experiencing for the first time the elementary environment that we will have so carefully prepared for them. In all the excitement of welcoming the new children, let us not forget their parents – for their parents, too, may be new to the elementary and just as much in transition as their children.

I would like to share with you a sort of “open letter” to these new parents – a letter that says what I would like to say to help them through their first months of parenting a new elementary child. Perhaps you will find some things in it that you would like to share with your own transitioning parents.

Dear Parents,

Welcome to our elementary community and to your new role as the parent of an elementary-age child. You did it! You successfully nurtured your child through the crucial first six years of life, giving them a solid Montessori foundation on which they will now begin to build a healthy childhood as the foundation for a healthy adolescence. It wasn't easy at times, and there was so much to learn about your child and yourself as a parent, so many surprises, so much to think about.

Much of what you now know about parenting will continue to stand you in good stead, but it is also important to acknowledge that you are now the parent of a new child. Those sweet, transparent, cuddly little ones that you have so loved and enjoyed will quickly be leaving their infant selves behind to stretch and strengthen themselves to leave the nest and began to venture out into the larger world. The environments and the relationships we and you so carefully prepared at school and at home to support the developmental needs of the young child no longer fit this new child. New preparations are in order! Not to recognize this and change our ways of working with the child would be like forcing a frog to continue living underwater as though it were still a tadpole.

Your child will very likely find their new elementary classroom to have much that is familiar to them from their previous school experience. They will see some of the same materials on the shelf. They will see children working by choice and with the grace and courtesy characteristic of the Montessori community. They will find that their new guide has the same respect for and commitment to children that their old guide had.

All the same, your new elementary child will need some time to grow into the new classroom environment. The elementary environment is full of freedom, friends, group work, and unstructured blocks of time, for these are some of the elements that elementary children need to reach their full intellectual and social/emotional potential. To a newcomer, however, it may seem like a never-ending party! Don't be too surprised if your little Primary worker bee is initially a bit disoriented and drunk on freedom. The guide and the community of older children will bring them around in due time and show them

what it means to work productively in the collaborative environment of the Montessori elementary. The elementary is largely about learning to balance freedom and responsibility, and this is the work of years, not days or weeks.

Don't worry if your child is not yet reading or doing arithmetic. The elementary guide will know how to meet them wherever they are and keep them moving forward. From the first day of school, there will be work for them to do as they pick up the thread from last year. The beauty of Montessori education, and the reason it is still flourishing around the world in scores of countries, cultures, and conditions, is that it is organized to support the natural development of each child according to their individual developmental timetable. Save yourself and your child the anxiety created by comparing them to other children and to students in curriculum-driven lock-step traditional programs.

As a new member of the elementary community, you can expect the guide to provide extra support for you as well as your child. The guide will be working diligently to create a solid partnership with you on behalf of your child. They will also be working to help you and your child find your respective places in the community of parents and children. They will be getting to know your child and connecting them to meaningful work. They, with the help of the older children, will be acquainting your child with the culture and customs of their new community. Later, sometimes as late as the second year, they will be introducing your child to Work Journals or other tools that will allow your child to gradually take more and more responsibility for their own education.

It goes without saying that your child's guide is there to help them develop academically and intellectually, but the bigger and even more important work they will be undertaking is the creation of a classroom culture that supports the development of character, positive habits of mind, and the social skills needed to be a happy contributing member of our work culture based on collaboration, mutual help, and mutual care. This greater focus on the social nature of work parallels the elementary child's psychological needs and natural interests. While the guide will continue to work with each child as they have need, they will work more often with the whole community. In a very real sense, the elementary child has two guides – the adult and the community of their peers – and a skilled guide will understand that they always have that other partner in the room to consider and support.

The stimulation and intensity of the well-functioning Montessori elementary classroom can be physically and emotionally exhausting for the new children who are still in transition. There's so much to take in, so much to think about, so much to learn! Plan now to offer them extra support at home by seeing that they have the very best nutrition and 9-11 hours of sleep each night. Renew your commitment to protecting them from daily exposure to television, computer games, and video games. Give them lots of "down time" and time outdoors in nature. This is not the time to load up their schedules with private lessons and extracurricular activities! Read aloud to them daily from books recommended by your school or your child's guide. Have a family meal at least several times a week to practice the art of conversation about topics your child will be encountering in school. Practice giving your elementary child room to talk, to speculate, to question, to imagine aloud. Speak less and listen more.

*Ask your guide to recommend good parenting resources for parents with elementary-age children. Be sure one of the books you read soon is *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen, How to Listen So Kids Will Talk* by Faber and Mazlish. Check out Sandy Blackard's book and online course at languageoflistening.com. And stay in touch with your guide as you have questions and concerns.*

Above all, enjoy getting to know this new child of yours, as they come to know themselves. The elementary years will be rich, challenging, and full of new experiences and vivid memories. Grow joyfully along with your Montessori elementary child these next six years! Never again will you have such an opportunity for self-improvement and personal growth. This is the gift of your new child to you, if you will only accept it.

Sincerely, John

John Snyder is an administrator at [Austin Montessori School](http://AustinMontessoriSchool.com). Follow him on [Twitter @jrs1231](https://twitter.com/jrs1231).

Community News

Chinese (Mandarin) Classes

Group Mandarin Classes available by native speaker and experienced language teacher. Lessons involve learning basic vocabulary, recognising basic questions and answering in proper sentences and holding simple conversation. Some students will also learn how to recognise Chinese characters and write them in the correct strokes.

For more details please contact Sok Yi Bulmer (Bachelor in Music Teaching and Graduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning) at 0404 617 650 or leesokyi@yahoo.com

Beechworth Football Club

Under 12's Football

Training for Under 12's football will start next Tuesday, 3 March at Baarmutha Park. Training will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 415pm to 530pm. To be eligible to play, players must be under 12 years of age on 1 January 2014. Both boys and girls are encouraged to attend. For further information contact Bill McLaughlin on 0408 660 970 or Craig Duff 0427 135 477.

Koala Help

Hi, my name is Vanessa Borschman

I live at 4 Warner Rd. There is a regular habitat route that the koalas take every year. There has been an increase in the population and also more activity because of the loss of habitat due to all the developments around this small corridor. I have spoken to the council at length regarding the koalas habitat and the new developments that are forthcoming, which is going ahead because the gums were planted and are not native to the area-they're just not protected so all the planning permits have been approved. I am concerned and wondered if your school would like to support these beautiful creatures that have been coming to my place for over 20 yrs or more.

They have been very active this year and their path is getting smaller, so the first photo is a young koala in my yard trying to find the right tree. They move around a bit. Their route usually starts somewhere in the old May Day grounds, then they travel around the old car park of the old hospital and can go two ways - travelling around the old hostel ground or taking the path to where there is a small park area that they often frequent plus my place, as well as the land that is to be developed next door to me so all those gums will go.

I thought it would be nice if your school and the children attending could maybe join the koala army. It has a program for monitoring and mapping. The other idea I thought of would be is maybe your school could apply for a grant to plant specific gums that koalas require. This is just a suggestion.

Also I have asked for help with signage to let the public know that koalas regularly cross the road however dangerous. Here is another picture of a most beautiful girl in my front yard hugging a tree.

Thank you for allowing me to send this email. I hope you will join me in protecting the koalas of Beechworth. <https://www.savethekoala.com/koala-army/about-army>

Sincerely Vanessa Borschman
nessiebor@gmail.com

I look forward to your response and maybe other ideas. Again thank you for reading my email

