

Ardoch Youth Foundation - projects for 2016

'Broadening Horizons' excursions

Ardoch's Broadening Horizons program connects disadvantaged children and young people with the world beyond their postcode through inspiring excursions that they simply cannot afford otherwise. These inspiring experiences increase students' engagement in learning and improve their social and communication skills. The excursions support the school curriculum, with Ardoch volunteers and teachers building on the experiences in the classroom.

This ensures that students from areas of significant disadvantage are able to access learning experiences that would otherwise not be possible. We need to find funding to support the following excursions for children in terms three and four:

Book making workshop and visit to the State Library Victoria	<u>\$1,600</u>
Whole school visit to Scienceworks with workshop	<u>\$1,800</u>
Kindergarten excursion to Werribee Open Range Zoo (with families)	<u>\$2,000</u>
Storywriting workshops for each class at 100 Story Building, Footscray	<u>\$2,500</u>



Learning through Lunch at Charcoal Lane

Ardoch's 'Learning through Lunch' program takes children from disadvantaged communities out of their comfort zone by providing an experience of formal dining, unfamiliar to many, that is challenging, provides a focus and purpose to explore and understand different expectations of behaviour and strengthens broad social skills. Charcoal Lane is Mission Australia's training restaurant specialising in native foods with a hospitality training program for indigenous young people. This inspiring setting enables students from Ardoch partner schools to learn about Aboriginal culture and native foods such as kangaroo, pepperberry and desert limes, as well as career pathways.

We need to raise **\$2,500** to provide each 'Learning through Lunch' at Charcoal Lane for an Ardoch partner school where children experience high levels of disadvantage because of poverty, transience, low literacy/numeracy skills, family breakdown, mental health issues and lack of positive adult role models. This innovative program addresses enables these students to learn about Aboriginal culture, try native foods and table etiquette, whilst interacting with volunteers from the local community, in a restaurant setting. The volunteers sit among the children, engage with and talk them through the experience of formal dining, helping them to make choices, decisions and experience food and tastes with which they may not be familiar.



LEGO Robotics

Ardoch's LEGO Robotics program engages students from disadvantaged communities in inspiring robotics activities to help unlock their potential as the next generation of scientists and engineers. Robotics is motivating and engaging for many students, drawing on, and developing, learning related to the disciplines of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. In 2015, two Ardoch partner schools participated in the FIRST LEGO League at Swinburne University and we now have fifteen schools in disadvantaged communities who would like to join them in 2016. The FIRST LEGO League is in November and the challenge will be launched in August so we need to secure funding for the robotics kits for each of these schools. The kits will be used year after year, ensuring sustainability and engagement of many more children.

This innovative project will improve education outcomes and raise aspirations for primary school students, improve future employability and connect them to science/engineering pathways. A donation of **\$5,000** will fund:



- six EV3 LEGO robotics kits and software
- teacher training
- registration and transport for the school teams to participate in the FIRST LEGO League.

Breakfast Clubs



Ardoch runs Breakfast Clubs at partner schools in Sunshine, Frankston North, Corio in the northern suburbs of Geelong and inner Melbourne to ensure that disadvantaged students have a healthy start to the school day. Many young people come to school hungry from chaotic home lives and would not otherwise have access to a nutritious breakfast. Some students are more likely to attend school because of the Breakfast Clubs and they all start the day much more focused and able to concentrate in class.

Our Breakfast Clubs are supported by food donations from FoodBank (funded by the Victorian State Government) but this only provides long-life food (oats, wheat biscuits, UHT milk, canned fruit and baked beans). We need to raise **\$5,000** to continue to provide the Breakfast Clubs with fresh milk, bread, fruit, yoghurts etc. and enable hundreds of students in disadvantaged communities to have a healthy start to the school day.

Go Away Mr Worrythoughts!



The project will address mental health issues and develop emotional resilience for hundreds of vulnerable Grade 3/4 students at Ardoch partner schools. This drama workshop presents young children with the opportunity to learn skills to deal with anxiety in a fun and non-confrontational way. The play is adapted from the acclaimed picture book, 'Go Away, Mr Worrythoughts!', by Nicky Johnston, whose son, aged five, was diagnosed with generalised anxiety disorder. The production (developed by Frankston Arts Centre) has been used extensively and successfully in Melbourne schools as an effective tool in addressing mental health issues for children.

They will benefit from a proven program that will help them to deal with worries and anxieties in their home and school lives. This inspiring and enjoyable drama workshop presents age appropriate ways of dealing with anxieties and worries that address mental health issues that are relevant to them. By addressing children's mental health and building their emotional resilience at this age, this project will prevent future problems and improve their health, wellbeing and learning outcomes as they grow older. It will also help to reduce the stigma around anxiety and mental health issues for these children so that they will feel more confident and comfortable in asking for help if needed.

We need to secure funding of **\$5,000** to run five performances of 'Go Away, Mr Worrythoughts!' with transport costs for students from our partner schools to travel by bus.

Early Years Learning Experiences and Resources

Ardoch works with early years services in Melbourne to support young children living in disadvantaged communities, centred on public housing estates and pockets of high need. Families experience intergenerational poverty and many children are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and experience significant disadvantage. Our volunteers read and play with vulnerable young children each week to build their confidence, literacy and language skills through reading, conversation, picture book exploration and games. We introduce the children to rich language environments and language experiences that they may not encounter within the home and learning experiences such as mobile farm visits and sessions on bugs, dinosaurs and fossils at the early years services.

We need to raise **\$10,000** to fund new books, toys and games for our early years volunteers to use to deliver a range of activities to build children's oral language and help prepare them for school. Ardoch provides inspiring learning experiences in the kindergartens and excursions to develop children's language and learning. These include 'Backyard Bugs' and 'Australian Animals' with Museum Victoria, music sessions, mobile farms indigenous art sessions and visits to the Children's Garden in the Royal Botanic Gardens. Parent engagement is key to young children participating, engaging and thriving in early learning and we involve families in the children's learning through home loan books, family activities such as excursions, reading support and donations of books, toys and learning resources.

