



# Little Green Gums

*...from little things  
big things grow...*



## Meet our Green Team

Jenny Kromar: Manager, Alpine Children's Service (ACS)

Susan Anehagan: Director of Marketing & Programs, ACS

Donna Coggins: Staff, Lake View Children's Service

Mica Corscadden: Staff, Mt Beauty Kindergarten & Lyndhurst Children's Centre

Jean Doodewaard: Staff, Mountain View Children's Service

Paula Miotto: Administration Officer, Myrtleford & Lakeview

Heather Tottenham: Parent, Lake View Children's Service

Wanted!: Keen parent representative from any of our Centres.

Welcome to the first issue of *Little Green Gums*. Our biannual newsletter aims to keep you informed of the new 'green' initiatives we are implementing across the Alpine Shire's early childhood services. We wish to keep you up to date and involved in all of the exciting new projects involving your children that are happening *right now* at our centres... so check us out!



Green Tip # 1: Cycling is the greenest way to travel, and also a fun way to exercise. Think twice before you need to get to A to B.





## We are becoming a certified sustainable Early Childhood Service

Alpine Children's Services are working together with Sustainability Victoria to become certified as a sustainable Early Childhood Service. We are hoping to be the first in regional Victoria to become certified and accredited. There are 5 core modules to complete and we have nearly completed our first module in "Waste".

We endeavour to ensure our centres and children are a part of sustainable practices and have a positive environmental focus. Our focus is to ensure that children, staff and parents all work together to provide the optimum early childhood program for each child in our service through basic environmental principals. We are engaging our children in learning and living a

sustainable lifestyle. One of the most significant responsibilities that early childhood professionals have is to support children to retain the sense of awe and wonder that they are born with, to add to that a desire to nurture and protect what is beautiful, and to encourage them to appreciate that there are many possibilities for honouring life and wonders that the world holds.

### Our GREEN progress:

- Worm farms
- Compost bins
- Rain water tanks
- Use of recycled materials for craft

- Teaching our children how to respect nature and all about recycling
- Edible garden at Lake View (with one commencing at mountain View in the near future)
- Use of recycled products within the services i.e. toilet paper, photo copy paper.
- Saving paper by NOW emailing, accounts, newsletters and staff pay slips.
- Waste audit undertaken
- ACS classified adds
- Recycle, re-use, reduce fundraiser Lyndhurst

**Green Tip # 2: Turn your refrigerator down.** Refrigerators account for about 20% of household electricity use. Use a thermometer to set your refrigerator temperature as close to 3°C in the main compartment; 5°C in the crisper and -18°C in the freezer. Make sure that its energy saver switch is turned on. Also, check the gaskets around your refrigerator/freezer doors to ensure they are clean and sealed tightly.

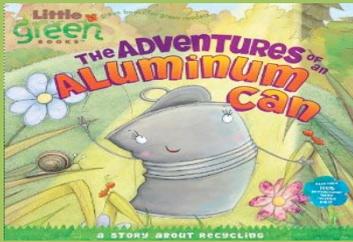
Coming in October - **Ride or Walk Week!**

Re-think the way you travel.

Details coming soon.



## Coming soon to your centre



Peek into this diary of an aluminum can as it goes on a journey from inside a bauxite rock, to the manufacturing line, to the store shelf, to a display on a bookshelf, to a garbage can, and finally to a recycling plant where it emerges into its new life as a baseball bat!

This is just one of 18 new fun, educational and ecological books coming to your centre soon.

## A Recycling Education for our Kinder Kids



On the 14<sup>th</sup> July Cleanway visited the Lakeview Kindergarten to teach the kids how to recycle properly. They showed a DVD of a house and yard filled with landfill rubbish which horrified everyone! The kids learnt some amazing uses for recycling - like fleece clothing made from recycled plastic bottles and also how to recognize the recycling symbol on everyday items.

*Why not ask your Kinder kid about the visit and put their new knowledge to use around home?*

## Shopping Extravaganza... Parent Green Power!

On Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> June shoppers in Bright were not disappointed. The Bright Community Hall was the place to be to pick up a bargain. For three to four weeks prior parents and members of the community were encouraged to cleanse their homes of pre-loved clothing and accessories and donate them to Lyndhurst Children's Centre for the healthy fundraiser. On Friday evening, twenty keen volunteers unpacked, sorted, folded and cheerily organised the mass of items. The day was a true community spirited event. At 'fill a bag for \$5' we managed to raise over close to \$800 (and with the rotary bbq the total came to over \$1000). Items that were not sold were donated back to the op-shop. The purpose of the event was to encourage people to reduce, recycle and reuse for our kids, our community and

our planet. Huge thanks to everyone who contributed, shopped or helped spread the word. The Bright Toy Library joined in on the day, creating a space for kids to play and raise funds by selling their enviro products (bags).



### Green Tip # 3:

Clean or replace air filters as recommended. Energy is lost when air conditioners and hot-air furnaces have to work harder to draw air through dirty filters. Cleaning a dirty air conditioner filter can save 5 percent of the energy used.

## Worms alive!

Did you know a worm has 5 hearts? The children at Mountain View Children's Centre in Myrtleford do. For a little fella 'Herman the worm' has become a big personality at the centre. The recent introduction of a worm farm as one of the centre's 'green' initiatives has led to a whole education on worms, thanks to Herman. Children are learning all about the dynamics and importance of a worm, their body parts; what they eat; where and how they live.

Each week two children are nominated to be the 'worm monitors'. They assist in the important



task of feeding and nurturing the worms and end up with a certificate for their efforts at the close of the week.

Craft activities of making worms out of stockings and worm colour-ins have all aided the understanding and awareness of worms and their importance in the composting cycle. This has given the children a sense of being connected with and contributing to the children's centre. The children have also shown growing appreciation and care for their natural environment.

# Did you know?

- ⇒ 70% of families at both Lyndhurst and Lake View Children's Centres have switched to electronic statements. That's over 450 pieces of paper saved each month!
- ⇒ There has been a 50% reduction of weekly waste at Mountain View Children's Centre. 16 green garbage bins have been slashed to 8 per week thanks to Herman the Worm and staff focusing on recycling. Amazing effort - Well Done!
- ⇒ Lyndhurst have gone from 25 - 30 kg each week in food waste going to landfill to zero waste going to landfill. All food waste now goes to worms, compost or home to families with dogs and/ or chooks. This is a fantastic effort and result and a special mention must go to our cook - Chris.



## 10 Things your kids can do to GO GREEN

- 1) Ask mum or dad for a green lunch - No plastic wrap and packets of junk food!
- 2) Walk, ride or carpool to Kinder or childcare.
- 3) Turn off the water while brushing teeth.
- 4) Get composting! It's a fun way to get your hands dirty and save the planet.
- 5) Turn off lights and appliances/electronics when not in use.
- 6) Ask to help with sorting out the recycling each week. Find out what goes in each bin and maybe make an easy to follow chart with pictures at home so that everyone knows what goes where.
- 7) Volunteer with community organizations that plant trees. Trees help us enjoy cleaner air and more beautiful landscapes.
- 8) Hand-wash dishes or only run the dishwasher for full loads. Most people don't realize it, but dishwashers use considerably more water to wash a load of dishes than the traditional sink method does. A LOT MORE. So, to conserve water, it's best not to use the dishwasher at all. If you do, use eco-friendly dishwashing detergent and only run the washer when it is completely full. If it's not full or if you can, choose to wash dishes in the sink instead, of course, with eco-friendly dishwashing liquid.
- 9) At birthday parties - rethink all of those throwaway products. Kids won't miss them if you don't buy them! You can also borrow plastic party gear from Toy Library or ask guests to bring their own plastic cup or plate. Use less throwaway cups, plates, utensils, paper towels, napkins - it just creates MORE waste for landfill. Going on a picnic? Stop wastage - use reusable plastic plates, cups and cutlery.
- 10) Ease up on the electronic games. Playstation and Wii and playing games on your computer uses A LOT of energy. That's why your system or computer feels hot afterwards! Play green - go outside and have some fun!

