



St Vincent de Paul Society
good works

SPARK News

Dear supporter,

Welcome to SPARK 2016 - what a great year it has been so far. SPARK have already held 2 training sessions for new volunteers and met with volunteer leaders to plan the year ahead. Whether you are new to SPARK or have been with us for many years - welcome! We have some exciting things in store for the year.



Find out more SPARK updates & opportunities below.

SPARK welcomes Katherine

SPARK welcomes Katherine who has joined the team as Program Officer for Parramatta West, Guildford and Auburn Public Schools. Katherine joins the team after working in community development in India and completing a Masters in Social Change and Development Studies.



"I'm thrilled to join the SPARK team in its efforts to assist newly arrived families feel settled and connected to their local communities. It's exciting to be a part of an organisation that actively works to inspire more inclusive communities. I've already met so many friendly and committed volunteers and I look forward to working with you in 2016."

Bush Walking Excursion a sizzling success!

Excursions are a great way to connect newly arrived families to Australian culture, sites and community. On a 36 degree day in January, 9 children, 4 parents, 5 volunteers and 2 SPARK staff went on a Bush Walking Excursion to Berry Island in Wollstonecraft. Both children and parents alike were delighted to see a bush turkey, water dragon, king parrot and a gaggle of kookaburras!



Thank you to Pam, Lucy, Erna, Angela and Zhi who shared their knowledge of nature and time with a families. For many it was their very first bushwalk! If you are interested in volunteering for our bush walk in the April school holidays please email spark@vinnies.org.au

Farewell to Granville Public School, Welcome Yennora Public School



Last year SPARK finished up at Granville Public School where we have been for 3 years. The children at Bright Sparks have been helped settle into their school support and are well supported in the school. Thank you to the school staff and volunteer team at Granville who have supported Bright Sparks!

This term we welcome Yennora Public School where Bright Sparks will run on a Tuesday for 6 weeks this term. With a tight knit community of 181 students and a dedicated school staff, SPARK is looking forward to supporting the newly arrived families of Yennora PS.

Drama SPARKs new ideas

We've always known SPARK volunteers have a diverse array of talents and last year's Special Sessions organised by volunteers proved that! Across four schools last year volunteers ran performances in theatre sports, *'The Enormous Carrot'* at Marsden Road, *'When the clock strikes midnight'* at Old Guildford and a talent show at Fairfield.



We want to share these great ideas across all schools and we have prepared an Activity booklet to help SPARK ideas at your school. There will be one copy at each school so just ask your volunteer leader or program officer.

More Opportunities with Volunteer Plus!

Looking to volunteer outside of Bright Sparks? SPARK are looking for volunteers to assist with a range of activities - from Circus at Fairfield next week to Bush Walking in the school holidays. If you'd like to join the roster and support wider family and community engagement events please email spark@vinnies.org.au with 'Volunteering Opportunities' in the headline.



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