

## GROWING BACK EAST GIPPSLAND

### HOPE AND REGROWTH - 2021 THROUGH THE EYES OF GIPPSLAND STUDENTS.

*"We chose a rainbow to represent the hope we share of our region gaining back its strength in all the areas we have had a loss."- Prep to grade 6 students Lakes Entrance Primary School.*



There's been plenty for us to grumble about during 2020.

A year that started with bushfires, was dominated by a global pandemic, and punctuated by floods has left many of us counting down to 2021.

Among the disappointment, heartache and confusion of 2020, Gippsland students have used art to add some colour to 2021.

In a unique calendar featuring paintings, drawings, photographs and sketches, students aged from 6 to 15 have shown what "Growing back East Gippsland" means to them.

For one, it is the fresh shoots from a log in the forest, for another it's spring flowers and the hope the blooms represent.

East Gippsland Art Gallery director Crystal Stubbs said creativity plays an important role in recovering from tragedy.

"It's a great idea, it is well documented that creating art can improve the mental health of people who have experienced trauma," she said.

"What was nice about this project is that it gave the young people of East Gippsland an opportunity to creatively display how they felt post-bushfires and, with the calendar, a platform to showcase their work."

Michelle Hibbert, Bushfire Recovery Manager at the Dept. of Education and her team were a fantastic support, along with the East Gippsland Art Gallery to encourage schools to submit artwork for the calendar and collect finished pieces during the Victorian COVID-19 lockdown.



*"We always had an abundance of little wrens here. After the fires there was none. No birds. We didn't know if they would return. It took three months for the birds to come back. We were excited to see them alive."- Bridie 10, Mallacoota P-12 College.*

Each calendar picture is accompanied by the student's photograph and an explanation of their artwork. It is a true insight into the resilience of the next generation and the Gippsland community spirit.

All money raised through the sale of calendars will be donated towards bushfire recovery efforts in East Gippsland communities.

This initiative is an opportunity to give-back to a community that's looking forward to a bright future.

Bulk orders of the calendars are available for corporate Christmas gifts, or to just add some love and light to office walls.

Kick 2021 off on the right foot with some inspired Gippsland student artwork.

**BUY THE CALENDAR at <https://gippslandia.shop/>**