

# Your Support Real Impact

Real stories of change made possible by you.



*"Having a reading buddy has been fun. I've gone up so many levels."*

**Inside this issue –  
all thanks to you.**

- Koko loves reading - and animal facts!
- Year 6 students set up for high school success

**2026 Autumn  
Supporter Edition**



**The Smith  
Family**

Learn today, change tomorrow.

# Your support helps Koko step into the spotlight



Koko, *student2student* participant

10-year-old Koko looks up from her book and calls out. “Hey, mum! Did you know an octopus has blue blood and three hearts?”

It’s a moment that shows how far Koko has come – through her hard work, teachers’ support, and the generosity of people like you. “Koko used to really struggle at school,” says mum Mahalia. “She really didn’t have much interest in reading, because she didn’t know how to pronounce words. She was reading at a very low level.”

## Reading powers learning

Every child in Australia should have the chance to build strong reading foundations – the crucial skill that unlocks learning and confidence. By Year 3, halfway through primary school, reading should be well established. Yet 1 in 3 students from low-income families are still behind.<sup>1</sup>

“Koko loves school now. She’s really excelled thanks to *student2student*.”

– Mahalia, Koko and Kendall’s mum

Without extra support, the impacts of poverty on learning can stack up quickly, making it hard for a child to keep pace – and even harder to catch up if they fall behind.

That’s why your support can be so life-changing for children like Koko. Through the *student2student* program, Koko was partnered with a reading buddy two years older than her. Together they read 2-3 times a week over 18 weeks. “It’s really fun having a reading buddy that’s a bit older than me,” says Koko. “We’ve explored different books together and I’ve gone up so many reading levels.”

## Right support at the right time

Building strong foundational skills at an early age is vital for children to keep up at school and continue to learn. Mahalia saw this transformation in Koko’s reading.

“Since *student2student* she’s reading so much more, and her vocabulary and her pronunciations are so much better. She loves the animal books filled with fun facts.”

Koko’s story shows how personalised support can help a child to build core skills and see their confidence soar. “Koko’s quite a shy child, now she has the confidence to put her hand up in class and read in front of everyone. Without *student2student*, her reading, writing and confidence wouldn’t be where they are today. It’s wonderful.”

1. NAPLAN National Results 2025, Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority.



Koko (right) with Mahalia and her sister Kendall (left)

Scan to watch the full story







Year 6 students preparing for high school

## From Year 6 nerves to high school ready

“A confident start sets students up for success throughout high school.”

– Jody, Program Facilitator

With a huge milestone rushing towards them, excitement was building – but so was the tension. When Year 6 students gathered to talk about high school, most said they were happy, but also nervous.

It's no wonder anxiety was creeping in. Starting high school is a major transition, made even harder for students dealing with the added pressures of poverty.

**It's a time when the right support can truly set a child up for future success.**

That's what our high-school preparation program, *Passport*, is all about. Busting myths about what going to high school is like, developing study routines, and building confidence, so children start school feeling ready and motivated.

*Passport* is one of the life-changing learning support programs available to thousands of students experiencing hardship, thanks to your support.

Held in primary schools each Term 4, it gives Year 6 students a safe space to discuss their worries and ask questions about this next big step.

Over six weeks, students find out what to expect and learn valuable skills, like how to do research and manage their time.

**Best of all, they learn about high school from other students.**

“The myth-busting session where students can ask high-school students questions is always a favourite,” says *Passport* facilitator Jody. “It shows that high school isn't such a scary place and shows them all the fun things and opportunities ahead.”

The school's deputy principal, who sat in on the *Passport* sessions, said the students' transformation was amazing to see:

“Students who face challenges in their lives tend to have fewer opportunities to develop the confidence they need for a successful move to high school. *Passport* motivated them to be ready to learn and see high school as a stepping stone to further education and a world of opportunities.”

**As for the children – they ended the program full of enthusiasm.**

“I'm kinda confident now,” said one student. “I'm excited,” agreed another. “At high school, you can just be you.”



Reymon (centre-left) and his family

Photo credit: The Courier Mail

## Reymon takes charge of his future

Students often tell us how much they love our community-based *Learning Clubs*. Not just for the fun learning activities and homework support they get there, but for the friendships they make with volunteers and other students.

13-year-old Reymon had such an amazing time at his *Learning Club* that when he started high school and found they didn't have one, he was determined to change that.

"Reymon absolutely loved *Learning Club* in primary school," says his mum, Leona. "He really used to struggle with learning, but it helped him so much. He always looked forward to it – especially the company of other kids."

Determined to keep the fun, community and support going, Reymon and his friends reached out to The Smith Family and helped set up a *Learning Club* at their high school.

The love of learning ignited through *Learning Club* encourages students like Reymon to stay engaged with their learning throughout the school year. Leona noticed how much it empowered Reymon:

**"He's much more confident now, and he's busy making plans for what to do with his life."**

– Leona, Reymon's Mum

**Access to *Learning Clubs* is just one of the many ways support like yours has helped Reymon take charge of his future.**

"Leaning support from The Smith Family has been the biggest blessing. I don't know where Reymon would be without it," says Leona.

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We're thrilled to introduce our new podcast, All I Can Be. Starting with the story of talented musician Faith, you'll see how everything changes when a child gets the chance to be all they can be.



**Education creates lasting change – and so do you.**