



Wollangarra Stage 1 – ‘Meeting the Mountains’ Information for Parents / Guardians

We are thrilled to be having your child attend our Stage 1 ‘Meeting the Mountains’ program. Wollangarra is a unique and simple place located in a relatively remote location in the Victorian mountains, there is no electricity and access is via flying fox across the Macalister River. Everything is in the old style, including wood fired stoves and boilers, open fireplaces and old gas lights. During the course, your child will be staying at our homestead and will travel further into the mountains for a three-day bushwalk. Wollangarra aims to provide a small but vital step towards a healthier environment, a stronger community and happier young people. We believe that by doing rather than talking, and fixing rather than complaining, we can help young people to see environmental issues as exciting and demanding challenges to the way we live, rather than as endlessly depressing and negative threats to our future.

Outdoor Education involves some unavoidable but manageable risks. However, the safety of all students and staff is our highest priority, and though aspects of this course may be mentally and physically challenging for students, this will occur in supervised and managed settings. Our staff have undergone Wollangarra’s current and involved training program including certifications in: wilderness first-aid, bushwalking, off road vehicle safety to ensure that they can manage the safety and risk during your child’s stay. Many young people who come on Wollangarra programs have not experienced the challenges and joys of being away from home, bushwalking and camping. Young people are given the opportunity to learn how they respond to conditions they may find difficult and/or uncomfortable and how to support each other as a group. Wollangarra believes these are important things for young people to learn about in a supported educational environment. Our remote location and the bush walking component are important in the delivery of these experiences.

Please ensure that you have thoroughly completed your child’s medical form, including mental health issues. The information you provide to us is vital for our staff to properly care for your child whilst they are on a Wollangarra program.

Wollangarra has no mobile reception and in line with the philosophy of Wollangarra we ask young people, staff and teachers to spend the week without their phones, watches or money. We acknowledge that this can be difficult for young people and parents/guardians. Though we see it as a great opportunity for young people to be present in the experience, engage with their peers and have a break from the pressures of social media and screens. We ask for your support in this approach and further to please provide your child with a camera that is



separate to their mobile phone. Wollangarra has a landline phone that can be used to contact your child should you require it.

We ask you to ensure that your child does not bring any additional food or snacks with them as our program is fully catered (minus lunch on the first and last day). Young people with their own snacks may put others at risk due to allergies and further this does not align with the communal Wollangarra philosophy.

Please see our 'what to bring list'. There is no need to purchase hiking gear for our programs as we have ample in our gear store, though participants are welcome to bring personal gear if they own it.

All young people are invited to participate in a follow up course (Stage 2 and 3) if they are interested. Further information about Wollangarra and our programs is available on our website. You are also welcome to contact us should you have other questions or concerns about your child.

We look forward to having your child on our programs,

Kind regards,

Toby Bucek and Kay Weltz

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