

## **New arrival has wheatbelt students jumping for joy**

GENNI Curtin is the YouthCARE chaplain at Lake Grace District High School and Pingrup Primary and when she isn't looking after students, she is often found caring for injured wildlife.

Over the years, the Lake Grace local has developed a reputation for being the go-to person for emergency wildlife care.

"Having looked after many baby kangaroos in the past we frequently get calls to look after a joey that has lost its mother," Mrs Curtin said.

"Recently we adopted another and the feeding regime requires that it be fed at regular intervals which means that on occasion I have had to take it to school on my chaplaincy days."

The joey spends most of its time in its bag - apart from the odd stretch for some exercise and is fed milk while in the portable 'pouch'.

Naturally, the new arrival has created much interest with the students, who want to hold and feed her.

The joey remained nameless for a short time, so it was put to the Year 3/4 class at Lake Grace District High School to name it.

"The boys wanted 'Skippy' and the girls wanted 'Matilda'," Mrs Curtin said.

"At home, we had the casting vote so Matilda it was or 'Tilly' for short."

At Pingrup, the students call her 'Crystal'.

"She makes me happy because she can run fast and she can catch up with me. I like to pat her and it's the best day ever when I see her," pre-primary student Cooper Roadley said.

When Tilly is ready she will return to the wild, but for now, her impact is in the classroom.

In one instance, she provided a therapeutic effect for a student suffering from anxiety when given the responsibility of looking after the joey.

"Children in particular respond to animals and I have found Tilly gives interested students a distraction from their worries at the time," Mrs Curtin said.

"It can also provide a means of opening up to further discussion."

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