



# inspire



Early Learning Centre kids show their BEAR program bears after meeting author Dimity Powell.

## BEARS ON SAME PAGE

A very special group of bears is helping Gold Coast early learners to discover a love of reading to help lay a good foundation for their continued education

### PEYTON HUTCHINS

It was a "beary" special day at the Carey Lane Early Learning Centre, with the launch of the new BEAR (Book Engagement And Reading) program. Designed to foster an

engagement with books and reading in children at an early age, the BEAR program presents each child with their own Teddy Bear reading companion. They will be encouraged to read to their special Carey Lane Bear and relay the stories and

adventures they go on together to their teachers at the Southport centre.

Special guest, local author Dimity Powell, treated the children to an animated story reading at the launch event, but not before completing the special job of surprising the

group with its very own new furry reading companions.

Ms Powell said she believed strongly in the importance of fostering a love of reading at an early age.

"It's important because it creates positive connections between young people and literacy even before they are fully capable of reading a book for themselves," Ms Powell said. "By encouraging

youngsters to share their story times with their own personal companion bear, this program promotes a deeper affinity with language, story structure and visual narrative, all key factors in the development of good reading practises.

"If a love of stories is created through reading, then I believe a child's sense of self-worth, empathy and tolerance will be enriched."

Ms Powell said she was delighted by the response to her question about what the

children had planned for their bears.

They included "showing him my favourite book at home" and "taking her to the library with me".

Ms Powell said she was confident the children would take good care of their bears and share their story times with them as they promised.

Carey Lane director Alison Combridge said the children had kept their promise to Ms Powell.

"The response from our parents has been overwhelming," Ms Combridge said. "They have reported back that their children are bringing the bears home and asking them to read to them and their Carey Lane bear each night.

"The bears are creating these lovely, valuable moments while strengthening their child's development and extending their love of reading too."

### INSPIRING LEADER



ROBINA State High School would like to celebrate their 2018 school captain Jay Bridgeman, who has just finished his tenure as Gold Coast Council junior mayor. Jay (pictured) has had a number of achievements throughout his time at the school, starting with Anzac Awards, becoming junior vice-captain, and representing Australia at the Parliamentary Debate World Congress in 2017.

During the Commonwealth Games, he served as a Baton Relay runner and showcased his school's environmental work to the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall.

All of this comes, according to principal Julie Warwick, after overcoming challenges to become a young influencer and leader in his community. The school would like to wish him the best of luck as he moves forward to bigger and better endeavours.



**Show:** Beauty and the Beast.  
**Where:** Somerset College Performing Arts Centre.

**When:** June 19-21.

**Tickets:** \$15-20.

**DANCING** teacups and singing candelabras, along with a love story that continues to be timeless – Somerset College is bringing *Beauty and the Beast* to the stage.

Revisit an old Disney favourite by following Belle and her prince as they discover true beauty is what is in your heart.

The school says elaborate make-up and costumes will provide the backdrop for their strong cast and powerful voices.

*Beauty and the Beast*, now in its final dress rehearsals, will open next Tuesday. The school encourages those interested to get in fast for tickets.

## THE PERFECT SLEEPOVER

### PEYTON HUTCHINS

The sleepover party has been taken to a whole new level with these adorable teepees.

The package includes themed teepees, crisp white sheets, himalayan salt lamp fairy lights and a faux fire.

The mastermind behind all of this is Angie Denman, who started her business Xavi and Zee – named aptly

after her children Xavier and Zander – j one year ago.

She said she was inspired by creating something unique for children.

"I have always loved planning parties and I saw an opportunity to start a sleepover party business with teepee parties for boys and girls," Mrs Denman said.

"I wanted to take the hassle out of parties for people by setting up and creating an amazing

experience for them to enjoy on their special day."

Mrs Denman said she was excited by what the future held for Xavi and Zee.

"Xavi and Zee will continue to expand and offer a total party experience," Mrs Denman said.

Xavi and Zee will explore more teepee themes, bell tent packages and themed party experiences to include picnic and serving table, invites, banner and props.

Xavier Denman, 5, and Zander Denman, 9, trying out one of their mother's teepee sleepout parties. Picture: MIKE BATTERHAM

