

FACING FIRE WITH FACTS EASES FEAR



Bushfire Kids Connect co-founder Sebastian, brother Harrison and friend Dakota.
Picture: Emma Brasier

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AGED just 9, Sebastian Ascott knows first hand what it means to survive a bushfire. His Woodside home came under threat during the Cudlee Creek bushfires leaving a lasting impression on his young but inquisitive mind.

It led him to co-found Bushfire Kids Connect – a community group which has helped launch an Australian-first bushfire-ready school program, now piloted in 10 South Australian schools.

Delivered in partnership with EdTech company Makers Empire, the software based program aims to help students understand bushfires and why they happen.

Using Makers Empire, a child could design a tracking monitor to predict fire behaviour, design how to get food and water to animals after a fire or create a toy for a bushfire survivor child to make them smile.

Sebastian said the program would help kids feel empowered.

“It makes me feel happy because I don’t have to be scared about another bushfire,”

he said.

“We can be prepared.”

South Australian Emergency Services Minister Vincent Tarzia said he was eager to see the results of the pilot.

Participating schools include Annesley Junior College, Lenswood Primary, Lincoln Gardens Primary, Lobethal Lutheran, Lobethal Primary, Mercedes College, Nazareth, Port Lincoln Primary, Scotch College and Stirling East Primary.