

# Ellie spreads message of responsible pet care

By *SAM PAINE* June 26, 2014, 4 a.m.



Ellie Cameron will promote responsible pet ownership as part of the Max Potential program.

Max Potential participant and Mudgee High School student Ellie Cameron will draw on her own experience to encourage local children to be responsible pet owners.

For her community project as part of the youth mentoring program, Ellie will talk to local schoolchildren about the commitment that comes with owning a pet. Ellie said children too often thought a pet was cute for a while, and then stopped taking care of it.

She has first hand experience, having had a dog when she was in Year 2 before losing interest in it and having it taken away because she wasn't caring for it. The experience made such an impact on her that she still remembers it clearly, and she wants to ensure other local children take care of their pets and don't have the same regrets she has now.

Ellie is now a responsible pet carer with two dogs and two cats. She will talk to students of Mudgee Public School about the responsibilities that come with owning a pet, perhaps taking along her border collie puppy to meet the children.

Ellie is one of 15 local students participating in Club Mudgee's Max Potential program, which pairs young people with an adult mentor to help them make positive changes in their lives.

When she joined the program, Ellie wanted to better manage her busy schedule.

She has enjoyed working with coach Michele George, who she said showed genuine interest and helped her develop her organised weekly timetable.

Now she starts her week by planning how she will manage her McDonald's shifts, homework and other commitments.