



ON STAGE: Emma Lowe, Jess Brassler, Chelsea McGhee, Madeline Harris, Sarah Finley, wand Amy Thomson with other participants in the performance at the Royal Children's Hospital.

Starring on the hospital stage

FIFTEEN young people from the southern Mornington Peninsula last week helped US exchange students to create and perform theatrical skits at the Starlight Room inside the Royal Children's Hospital.

The program was part of the Rye and District Community Bank's youth leadership programs.

"The program involves bringing together young people from different nations to develop cultural understanding and to work side by side on a community service project," said the director of the Rye Youth Centre, Michelle Wright.

"It empowers its young participants to step up, take a leadership role and be part of a team of young people giving up their time and energy for a week to bring some vibrancy and joy into the lives of others in need. The performances were solely created and performed by young people for young people, which embraces the YMCA philosophy of the youth centre."

Each performance was recorded and broadcasted directly to the televisions throughout the hospital wards for those children unable to make it into the Starlight Room.

The room is set up inside the

hospital as a colourful, fun-filled place where children can take time out from their hospital ward.

"At first I was very nervous, but once we got into the Starlight room and started performing everyone loved it and we forgot about being nervous," said Rosebud participant Emma Lowe.

Another local participant, Chelsea McGee described the highlight of her experience was in getting to know the American teens, developing a great team spirit and then being able to share it with the youngsters in the Starlight Room.

For information about Rye Youth Centre phone 5985 9101.