



St. Margaret's
Primary School

NEWSLETTER

Term Three, Week 3
July 29th, 2021

From Sonya's Desk

Leadership and Management News

Dear Parents, Friends and Students,

After searching an array of websites for key information to share with our school community about Social and Emotional Learning and how to support our students' wellbeing in these constantly changing COVID times, I came to the realisation that there is an overabundance of information, webinars and personal and professional points of views. Sometimes we just need to give things a go, reflect on our mistakes and successes and keep moving forward. We are all different, as are our children and therefore one size does not fit all. This process of self-reflection combined with conversation is integral to modelling and developing a sense of self-awareness for our children.

One of my most favourite movies, *Inside Out*, (Docter, 2015) has a plethora of social and emotional key facts intertwined into the storyline. One concept being; to truly appreciate happiness requires us to also experience sadness. Ironically, the fear of emotional sadness often restricts a person's ability to experience the heights of happiness. As parents we can sometimes try to shield our children from sadness.



Firstly, it is important to be able to use words to label our feelings of sadness: agony, anguish, broken heart, hurt, sorrow, dejection, dismay, homesickness, distress, unhappiness and more. All these emotions are a response to a negative situation.

It is also important to understand that sometimes sadness can often be a result of another feeling, such as anger, stress, guilt, grief, anxiety or hopelessness. Sometimes, the other feeling may be so strong that children don't realise they are sad.

So what does sadness feel like? It may change how they feel physically. Perhaps they have a stomach ache or a headache, or they can't sleep.

Sadness may also change how they feel emotionally. Perhaps they are teary, grumpy, bored or frustrated, or just keen to avoid other people.

Recognising sadness, and understanding that it is okay to feel sad, is a sign of a stable sense of wellbeing according to, (*Wellbeing*, 2020) betterhealth.vic.gov.au. They go on to identify that people *with strong social-emotional skills are better able to cope with everyday challenges and benefit academically, professionally, and socially.* **Children learn a lot from observation and genuine, open age relevant conversations.** If you feel uncomfortable talking about your own experiences of sadness and happiness, sit, watch and discuss how characters are portrayed in your child's favourite movie, television series or book.

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From personal experience I am aware of how difficult it is to see our children in a state of sadness. However if they rarely experience it, or are unable to label what it is and how it came about, it is difficult to help guide them through it.

Experiencing **small** amounts of sadness, or *sitting with discomfort* and utilising mindfulness strategies is said to increase activation in our brains which is crucial for planning and suppressing impulsive reactions. This in turn enables us to make more effective decisions when faced with aversive circumstances, (Cherry, 2019).

As highlighted at the beginning of my reflection however, not everyone deals or identifies with sadness the same, and therefore their support is not the same. The Department of Health, Victoria has identified key factors to promote and achieve wellbeing; develop and maintain strong relationships with family and friends, make regular time available for social contact, eat wholesome, nutritious foods, do regular physical activity, become involved in activities that interest you, join local organisations or clubs that appeal to you, set yourself achievable goals and work towards them, try to be optimistic and enjoy each day.

To implement these factors in our current COVID climate we have to get creative; Family ZOOM video quiz nights, physical challenges amongst your friendship groups to raise money for a worthwhile charity – or just for the fun of it, a list of tasks to do around the home that everyone can work on together creating fun memories that you can recall after lockdown has finished.



Bibliography

- Cherry, K. (2019, August 18). How the Fight-or-Flight Response Works. Biological Psychology. <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-the-fight-or-flight-response-2795194>
- Docter, P. (Director). (2015). Inside Out [Film]. Pixar.
- Wellbeing. (2020, 05 27). BetterHealth Channel. <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/wellbeing>

Warm Regards
Sonja

Update of First Eucharist for Yr 4 & 5 Children

Due to COVID restrictions, we have again had to change the time of the Year 4 and Year 5 First Eucharist. The Year 5 celebration is now Sunday 8th August at 2pm. The Year 4 celebration is now Sunday 8th August at 4pm. The restrictions allow for only 100 people in the Church including Father Jim so this will allow for each child + 2 parents only. Thank you for your understanding of this.

The Emmaus Meal (a preparation evening for the Year 4 & 5 Eucharist) will now be cancelled - due to COVID restrictions and limitations of parents onsite at St Margaret's School.

St Mary's Parish Feast Day

Unfortunately due to current COVID restrictions this event has been postponed.

Performing Arts Semester One Recap

The Grades 3-6 students had a terrific first semester participating in Performing Arts. They were involved in learning about dances from all over the world as well as learning about different dance styles. The Grade 3/4 students were fortunate to have Megan English, one of our very own St Margaret's parents, volunteer to teach Highland and Irish dancing and the Grade 5/6 students had Shelley from Motion Dance and Jami from Exisdance inspire them with learning the dance styles Hip Hop and Breakdance. Along with learning about dance, the students were also involved in creating scripts and performing plays. The 5/6 students also turned their live plays into mini films and we celebrated our learning with a film festival at the end of the unit. Considering the subject was new to most students, the participation and effort was of a high standard and I couldn't be more proud of the progress made!

Here are some examples of the feedback we received from the students.

"It was really fun filmmaking during Drama" Emmy 5/6 JK

"It was really incredible to learn different dance styles and find one I really enjoyed, which was Hip hop." Deegan 5/6 JK

"I liked getting creative, like making up our own scripts." Eden 5/6 MD/MH

"I liked being able to put on role plays with people I don't usually work with." Jessie 5/6 MD/MH

"I really liked working in groups for drama because even though not everything always went your way, it was still fun!" Hayden 5/6 MD/MH

"I improved at not feeling so embarrassed when performing in front of people." Felicity 5/6 JB

"It was fun doing dance. I didn't think I could dance and I would love to do it again sometime. Thanks for teaching us Miss Emma." Peteille 5/6 JB

"I liked how we got to make up our own dance and I also liked how we got to perform our plays for each other." Stella 3/4 PB

"I liked learning the Italian dance because we did lots of movements like jumping and spinning." Clayton 3/4 MD/MdJ

"Drama was really fun because we played some new games where we had to try and make people laugh." Adriel 3/4 LC

"I liked how we used a lot of energy when we were dancing. Even though it was hard, it was fun!" Izzy 3/4 LC



Emma Badr
Performing Arts

School Community News

Message from Xavier's Family

Last year our family participated in the International Friends Program which was really terrific. We now have a friendship with an Indian student that we have regular contact with – we even were invited to attend his graduation as his family were not able to travel to Australia as was planned.

There is another program starting in August and I thought it would be great to encourage families from St Margaret's to participate. There are no costs or expectations; you get out of it what you put in. Xavier now has a much better understanding of life in India and the whole notion of studying at University. It has been such a wonderful learning approach and helps him to appreciate living in Australia and the benefits of having a University education.

Kind regards
Lisa Cunningham

Please see the online version of the newsletter for information about the International Friends Program.



Nikhil on his graduation day with Xavier.

Upcoming Dates

August

- 8 First Eucharist Yr 5 2:00 p.m
- 8 First Eucharist Yr 4 4.00pm
- 13 Yr 1/2 Identity Walk Excursion
- 16 St Margaret's Book Week
- 16 Author Visit Heath McKenzie P-6
- 16 Author Visit Lee Fox P-6
- 19 Book Week Dress Up

School Fees

Term 3 fees are now due and payable by August 20th.



St Margaret's Primary School
83 St Albans Road
East Geelong 3219
Ph 5229 7453 Fax 5229 5531

Principal: Brian Everett principal@smgeelongeast.catholic.edu.au

Office Manager: Anne Miller amiller@smgeelongeast.catholic.edu.au

Business Manager: Libby Fitzgerald lfitzgerald@smgeelongeast.com.au

Parish Priest: Father Jim Clarke frj@stmmarysgeelong.com.au



International
Friends
Program

STUDY GEELONG NEEDS YOU

Are you a local resident who enjoys sharing interests, building connections and cross-cultural exchange?

Then apply to be a part of the International Friends Program and be matched with an international tertiary student studying in Geelong, for 12 weeks.

This is not a live in program.



Help show a student what a friendly, amazing place Geelong & The Bellarine is.

Applications close 31 July 2021

For further information and to apply go to <http://studygeelong.com.au/international-friends-program>

