

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Principal: Mr John Barrington
Tel: (02) 4230 8500
Fax: (02) 4256 5793
Student Absences: 4230 8585
Postal Address: PO Box 130, Albion Park NSW 2527
Email: info@sjchsdown.catholic.edu.au
Website: www.sjchsdown.catholic.edu.au

Date: 30th April, 2015

Term 2 Week 2B

Dear Parents, Students, Staff and Friends of St Joseph's Community,

I recently re-discovered this article and commentary titled 'The Attitude', which I include for your reflection:

The Attitude

If you think you are beaten, you are.

If you think you dare not, you don't.

If you'd like to win but think you can't, it's almost certain you won't.

If you think you'll lose, you're lost.

Things begin in a person's will - it's all in the state of the mind.

Life's battles don't always go to the strongest or fastest person.

But, sooner or later the one who wins is the one who thinks they can.

There is that old saying that attitude is everything and how very true that is. As teachers and parents, we have a responsibility to not only teach our young people the skills and knowledge needed to navigate the world of the 21st century, but also, the importance of attitude. State of mind eventually surpasses ability in determining ones success in life.

Willingness, effort, determination and self-confidence are so important if young people are to achieve their goals in life. A negative attitude, an 'I can't' mentality and blaming others when things go wrong, is a certain recipe for failure.

In order to promote the right attitude we each have a responsibility to not only support young people but also to allow them to make mistakes and learn from those mistakes. This builds resilience and this is another critical quality which is essential for survival in today's world. As parents and teachers we can be tempted to be over protective which, in the long run, can do more harm than good.

Mr John Barrington
Principal

An old man said, "Erasers are made for those who make mistakes." A youth replied, "Erasers are made for those who are willing to correct their mistakes!" Attitude matters!



Parent - Teacher Communications Reminder

When wishing to speak with a teacher with regard to your child's progress at school, parents are reminded of the following procedures that are in place at St Joseph's. Parents are asked to call the school office to request a phone interview with the teacher. If the teacher is teaching, they will return your call at their earliest convenience.

Should the matter relate to the pastoral care of your child, then the appropriate member of staff to speak to is your child's Year Coordinator. For concerns relating to your child's learning in a particular subject then these should be directed to either your child's Subject Teacher or the relevant KLA/Subject Coordinator. If your query is in relation to your child's learning in general then you may wish to contact your child's Year Coordinator and in some cases as applicable the Curriculum Coordinator, Mr Paul Hughes.



A reminder that for child protection reasons all visitors are required to report to the office, where office staff will assist in directing you to the appropriate meeting venue for your appointment. The only reason that a parent is permitted to enter the school without reporting to the front office is if they are visiting the Uniform Shop.

E-Diary Communication

Parents may also wish to communicate with teachers using the messaging facility available in the new school eDiary. Parents who have not already done so are reminded to please ensure that you have registered your access to your child's eDiary using the link provided in the letter emailed to parents on 4th April, 2015. Should you be experiencing any difficulty accessing this important means of parent-teacher communication please contact Mrs Deb Boughton at the school so that your access can be enabled as soon as possible for you as required. Teachers may have entered important messages to parents pertaining to your child's academic and/or behavioural progress at school so it is very important that all parents have registered your access to the eDiary.

Excursion/Sport Notes

Parents and students are reminded that all permission notes must be returned by the due date for your child to be permitted to participate in excursions. We have been experiencing a number of issues in relation to this area, whereby unfortunately in some instances the majority of students have not followed this requirement. If insufficient notes have been returned by the due date excursions will need to be cancelled. Parents are asked to speak to your child stressing to them that it is their responsibility to let you know the due dates for excursion permission notes and payments to be made. There is a lot of important organisation that needs to be completed once the notes for attendees have been returned and therefore the school requires all students to please return notes by the due date.

Mrs Jenny Bell, Assistant Principal



Pastoral Care

Soon many students, both primary and secondary, will have to sit for the NAPLAN exam. Despite all the discussion about the purpose of the NAPLAN tests, one thing is certain - it can be very stressful for a number of students. Michael Grose suggests that sitting for this exam can be a "learning experience, rather than a dreaded pressure test". In this week's article he suggests a number of strategies to help anxious students. However, something very important that I took from the article is that "children take their cues from parents about how to handle many situations" and "Optimistic parents beget optimistic children". Naturally, the opposite

can also be true. Commonly, anxious parents can end up having anxious children. This is timely article. Please take the time to read this information.

Mrs Megan Schibeci, Pastoral Care Coordinator

From the Finance Office \$\$\$\$\$\$

Excursion/Sport Payments

Please ensure that payments for excursions, sporting events etc are paid by the due date. Failure to do so could result in the student not being able to attend. A further reminder that payment for excursions can be made through Try-Booking. There will be a link on the excursion note for payment. It is also important that the permission slip is returned with the payment details noted, as students will not be able to attend without signed permission.

School Fees

School fee statements are being sent home with students this week. The next instalment is due Friday 5th June, 2015. If you have not paid the first instalment please do so immediately.

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Parents of Years 7 & 9 Students

The NAPLAN examinations will take place in the coming weeks. ACARA have released a parent information pamphlet highlighting the purpose and importance of the

testing so that any myths that exist can be dispelled. I encourage you to read the document (by clicking [here](#)) and in doing so discussing the purpose of the exams with your children.

As a school we have the moral obligation to meet the needs of each and every student in our classes. Although challenging we are constantly collecting, collating and using data to help inform us as teachers, what the students in our classes need at any given time. NAPLAN although just one of the forms of data, remains an important external test that we use to develop learning and teaching programs around once we have the information. We ask each and every student for their best in all lessons and this is also the case in this testing. It will provide for us a clear understanding of each student's strengths and weaknesses allowing us to target those the moment the results have been released.

Any other use for the data gathered in NAPLAN, namely the comparison of schools or even student to student is not at the heart of the testing purpose.

Parents of Year 12 Students

The HSC Timetable was released on Wednesday 29th April. This timetable is constructed by the BOSTES and is available to students by logging onto their Student Online account. Here you will find your own personal HSC timetable. Students are encouraged to:

- ◆ Record the dates and times of EVERY exam they have onto their wall planners, calendars on devices and inform their parents.
- ◆ Begin to plan out their approach to study programs (working backwards) with a view to completing revision in a suitable timeframe prior to each exam rather than leaving it late to prepare.

The complete HSC Timetable will be released to schools and the public on Monday 4th May, 2015.

Half Yearly Reports for Year 12 students are to be realised in the coming week. We ask that if you have any concerns you contact your child's teachers to organise a meeting or discuss those concerns with them. There is still plenty of time to go before the end of the HSC journey and there is always time to make a positive impact on results.

Mr Paul Hughes, Curriculum Coordinator



Late last term, the Year 11 PDHPE students arrived to crisp and cool conditions at Bungonia State Forest Base Camp on Wednesday morning excited for their camp. Students got their hiking packs ready and had to carry all their equipment - tents, sleeping bags, food and cooking equipment - as well as 3 litres of water in their packs. We started the downhill descent towards the river, with many students taking the easy option and sliding down the hill. A hard day of walking was finished off with a nice swim in the river and an early night at camp. We camped by the river that night and were up at 6am in the dark to prepare for the 10km, 400m elevation climb back to base camp. The climb was tough

with many students feeling as though they just wouldn't make it, but we all got there in the end. Another early night at base camp and a rough sleep with temperatures dropping to 4 degrees overnight. Our last day was spent abseiling down a 25m cliff and exploring a cave, descending 150m below the surface!

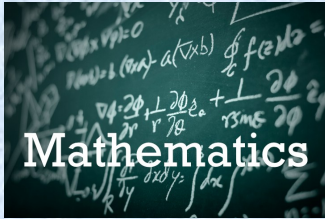
The students supported and encouraged one another through the challenges and tough sections of the hike. They all displayed a positive attitude and were a credit to themselves, their parents and the school. A big thank you to Ms Sproule and Mr Hetherington for giving up their time and making our adventure an enjoyable educational experience.

Surprise, Surprise.....did you know that active kids learn better!!! Visit this link to find out more. Click [here](#)!!

School Athletics Carnival

A reminder that the school Athletics Carnival will take place on Tuesday 2nd June at Croome Road Complex. Students are asked to register their mode of transport to the venue, on the Google Doc sent to them via email from Mr Hetherington, as soon as possible. Further details will follow in the next few weeks.

Mr Stephen Armstrong, PDHPE Coordinator



Australian Mathematics Competition - Thursday 30th July - Years 7-10

This Internationally recognised competition has an emphasis on problem solving and the questions are designed to be fun for the student. Time allowed is 75 minutes for the secondary paper. All students receive a certificate of participation, credit, distinction or high distinction and are also provided with a detailed report showing how they performed on each problem with wider statistical rankings. If any students are interested in entering this competition please let your

Mathematics teacher know or email Mrs Leicht before Tuesday 5th May, 2015.



Poetry

SAETA are holding a Spring Poetry Festival. Students and teachers are invited to submit poems to this year's competition. A selection of the best entries will be published in the 'Spring Poetry Edition of Opinion'. There are prizes given in a variety of categories. Entries close on Friday 7th August, 2015. Please see the English Faculty for further details.

Writing

Write a story about someone inspiring in your community for the 2015 Australian Catholics Young Journalist Award. Years 5 to 9 students can have their winning works published, win cash and great prizes. Entries close 29th May, 2015.

The Fellowship of Australian Writers is holding a 'Young Writers Short Story Competition' that is open to students from all year groups. This competition is a fantastic way for all students to share and highlight their creative gifts and talents and possibly win one of the great prizes that are on offer. Students may enter work that they have completed in class or at home. Please see the library notice board or Mrs Schneider for more details.

This year the Children's Book Council of Australia celebrates its 70th Anniversary and the book week theme is "Books Light up our World". In preparation for Book Week, our faculty is holding a competition to promote, encourage and embrace a love of reading amongst our school community. There are two aspects to the competition, a visual and a written component.

Visual - Devise a new front cover for one of the books shortlisted for this year's CBCA awards. You may use any format you choose - "Pages" on your iPad or traditional colouring pencils and paper!

Written - Write a speech based on the topic: 'Books light up our World'. Your speech may be up to 1000 words in length. Students may enter either or both categories and we have great prizes on offer to students from each your group. Please speak with your English teacher for more information.

Miss Francesca Gazzola, English Coordinator



Winter warmers continues each recess and lunchtime in the library, so if you fell like doing some knotting or crocheting, you are very welcome to come and share good company in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

Also, as we prepare for our Winter Warmers Appeal, please bring cans of soup to the library, where they will be kept for distribution by our

Social Justice Committee. All of your efforts and donations are very much appreciated.

Mrs Frances Schneider, Librarian

Careers Expo....Years 10 and 12!

All Year 10 and 12 students will receive a permission note and information about the Careers Expo. All Year 10 and 12 students will be attending this event on 12th May. The public session is open to parents and the general public on 12th May from 3:30-5:30pm. Please see the flyer attached to this week's newsletter for further information. Students are reminded that prompt return of the permission note for the day is required to secure your attendance.

Mrs Sue Kennedy, Careers Adviser





Project Compassion

Last term, our social justice focus was on raising money for Project Compassion. This year's theme was "Food for Life". As Pope Francis says: "It is a well-known fact that the current levels of production are sufficient, yet millions of people are still suffering and dying of starvation. This is truly scandalous."

Our school community have helped the world's poorest people establish sustainable food through their generous donations during Term 1. I am proud to announce that over \$3,600 was raised for Project Compassion! Thank you to everyone who contributed. Special mention goes to the following homerooms who raised an impressive amount of money: 9.1 (\$299.95), 8.3 (\$157.75), 12.2 (\$123.55), 8.1 (\$120.30), 10.5 (\$117.40).

Emergency Relief for the Nepal Earthquake

On 25th April, 2015, a 7.9 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal between Kathmandu and Pokhara. The death toll is increasing by the hour, with more than 3,300 deaths reported and a further 7,000 people injured during the shock. According to initial estimations, 8 million people in 39 districts have been affected. Caritas Australia and staff are currently on the ground working to coordinate rescue efforts and provide the local people with food and temporary shelter.



This Monday 4th May, students are encouraged to bring a monetary donation which will be given to Caritas Australia so that they can respond to immediate needs such as food, shelter, clean water and non-food items, while also supporting long-term recovery and development in Nepal and the wider region.

St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal

This term, our social justice focus is on donating items towards St Vinnie's Winter Appeal. As the months grow colder and the cost of living continues to escalate, many families are struggling to buy food, pay the bills and simply make ends meet.

Students are encouraged to donate cans of soup, which we will display in the Library in the form of a pyramid. Please support this worthy cause.

Live Below the Line

This term, some of the students at St Joseph's will be taking part in Live Below the Line. Live Below the Line is the annual fundraising campaign for Oaktree, one of Australia's largest youth-run organisations. It is a tough but meaningful challenge, which asks participants to eat on \$2 a day for five days from the 4th to the 8th of May.

Living on \$2 a day is the Australian equivalent of the extreme poverty line. Taking on the challenge is a way to raise awareness of the challenges faced by those living in extreme poverty as well as raise funds for Oaktree's overseas partners. This year, Oaktree's focus is on funding scholarships, renovating schools and providing education resources for students in Cambodia, Timor-Leste and Papua New Guinea.

If you would to donate, please visit the website by clicking [here](#), click on 'Find a Participant' and search for one or more of the following students who will be undertaking the challenge:

Olivia Nicholson (Year 11), Miranda Moffat (Year 8) and Shantel Mortimer (Year 7).

Miss Senitta Hurley, Social Justice Coordinator

**Uniform Shop Helper for Week 3, Term 2
Thursday 7th May - Nickie Collingburn**

ANZAC DAY

2015

Lest we forget

Anzac Day Commemoration

Thank you to those many students who attended the various dawn services held on Anzac Day last weekend. In particular, those that represented St Joseph's by laying a wreath at Albion Park RSL Dawn Service (*Kurtis Barker, Sage Farrell, Kyle Waples, Anthony Gay and Thomas Di Pietro*) and Shellharbour City Council Dawn Service (*Olivia Nicholson, Monique Brady, Josie Hallam and Taylor-Jane Oswald*). These students respectfully and reverently honoured the spirit of the Anzacs and our school. Special mention to *Jordan Howard and Joseph Timpano* who participated in the March through their association with Cadets. We would like to thank the many students who paid their respects at dawn services across the region with their own families. It was great to see so many students in attendance.

Miss Jessica Boniface, HSIE Teacher



Red Cross Mobile Blood Bank Visit on Monday 30th March

Last term we had our yearly visit by the Red Cross Mobile Blood Van and what a day we had. Thank you and congratulations to all students who kindly donated or attempted to donate blood. I was inundated with offers from students in Year 10 and 11 and students in Year 12 even though they were completing exams! Special mention goes to Year 12 student Damon Dropulic who came to school even though he was in the middle of his exams and did not have any exams that day and in his full school uniform to donate blood!! The mobile Blood Van will be at Stockland Shellharbour from Monday 11th May to Tuesday 19th May. If you do go to donate don't forget to sign up to the RED25 Club under our school name. St Joseph' is part of the Illawarra School Challenge and after our day of donations we are in number one spot!! So join the RED25 Club so that your donation points go towards our school tally. We would love to stay in top place (just in case a certain red and white football team slips any lower down the league ladder!!).





Cancellations

Unfortunately the Girls Diocesan Touch Football Gala Day set down for this Friday 1st May at Dalton Park has been cancelled. A selection trial only will be held in the near future to select the U/15's and Opens teams to represent the Wollongong Diocese at the NSWCCC Touch Championships in Port Macquarie on 16th June. A date for these selection trials is to be advised.

Congratulations....

Josh Norris (Year 12) was last Friday Night awarded the Kiama 1st Grade Cricketer of the Year as well as the U/21 Player of the Year at the age of 17 after only making his 1st Grade debut this

season in a team that played in the Finals. Congratulations.

Best of Luck

- ◆ *Danielle Vasquez* in Year 10 who is competing at the NSW All School Golf Stroke Play Championships at Wentworth Falls this week.
- ◆ *Rachael Thompson, Zachery Sturley, Jacob Lord, Sophie Mills, Thomas Blunden, Leisha Ryan, Hayley Seeney and Matthew Sperring* who are representing the Diocese of Wollongong at the NSWCCC Swimming Championships at Homebush on Monday 4th May.
- ◆ To the Boys Soccer teams who are attending the Diocesan Football Championships in Nowra (U/13 and 15's) and Albion Park (Opens) this Friday 1st May.

Mrs Michele Garbutt and Mrs Jodie Linsley,
Sports Coordinators
"Remember—"Too much sport is never enough"

Sport Calendar Term 2 2015

4th May - NSWCCC Swimming
 5th May - NSWCCC U/15 Netball Selection Trials
 6th May - NSWCCC Open Netball Selection Trials
 NSWCCC Southern Country Rugby League Selection Trials
 19-20th May - NSWCCC Rugby Union Selections
 25th May - NSWCC Basketball Selections
 25-27th May - NSWCCC Football Selections

Canteen Roster 2015	
4th May	Antonella Adams, Nicole Norris, Paricia Zanatta, Helen Cheetham
5th May	Linda Wilson, Zora Volf, Nell Derubeis
6th May	Leanne McMillan, Oriana Dimise, Tina Brown, Amanda Quintel
7th May	Robecka Perri, Christine Brown, Tracey McLaughlin
8th May	Tracey Teixeira, Nicole Oswald, Susan Rayner, Michelle Partridge, Tracey Sumner

For Sale!!!!

Nachos are now available at recess and lunch during the winter from the Canteen. Orders MUST be made before school!!!!

******* Important Dates for your Diary *******

30 April-1st May - Year 9 Retreat
11 May - P&F Meeting
12 May-15 May - NAPLAN Years 7 & 9
29 May - P&F Trivia Night
2 June - School Athletics Carnival
8 June - Queens Birthday
16 June - School Photos
18 June - Year 7 Vaccinations



BlueScope Cadetships

Any students from Years 10-12 who are interested in this career path should contact Mrs Kennedy ASAP for updates and opportunities.

UOW YouTube Chat: Choosing a Career

Click [here](#) to view some informative chats regarding University orientation and enrolment, Your ATAR, Your Options, Early Admission, Your Career, Your Choice and Future Finder.

Southern Cross University Head-Start Program

Registrations for Head-Start 2016 open 1st May. SCU provides the opportunity for high achieving Year 11 and 12 students to get a taste of student life by studying university courses while still attending school. Applicants will be selected based on their academic performance, a personal statement and the recommendation of their Principal. Click [here](#) for further details.

ANU Get Set Program

Friday 15th May - 8:30-4pm, Ian Ross Building 31, Australian National University. The Girls in Engineering and Technology Program - Get Set, is designed for female students in Years 11 and 12 who wish to explore an education and career in engineering or computing. Click [here](#) for details.

Group Training Organisations

Group Training Organisations provide a training and employment arrangement, where an organisation employs apprentices and trainees and places them with host employers. A GTO undertakes the employer responsibilities for the quality and continuation of the apprentices and trainees employment and training. Click [here](#) and [here](#) for further details.

Whitehouse Institute of Design Open House

Friday 19th June - Saturday 20th June, 2 Short Street, Surry Hills. Whitehouse Institute of Design Australia will host an open house for potential students, school leavers and the general public to experience the Sydney and Melbourne campuses as well as discover what their students have been working on. Call 1300 551 433 or enquiry@whitehouse-design.edu.au.

College of Event Management Information Session

Friday 8th May, 6:30pm, Level 9, 28 Foveaux Street, Surry Hills. Speak to lecturers and staff to learn about the course and career opportunities available after graduation. Click [here](#) for details.

JMC Academy Workshops

Get an insight into JMC Academy and a taste of what a career in the creative industries would look like. Workshops are designed for high school students and cost \$20. Plenty to choose from. Click [here](#) for details.

International Film School Sydney Workshop

Thursday 9th July, 10am-3pm, International Film School Sydney, 41 Holt Street, Surry Hills. Students will learn about the fundamentals of filmmaking, crew roles on set, and how to perform the best direction. Click [here](#) for more details.

Australian Public Service: Indigenous Traineeship Program

Applications close 25th May. This program offers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders the chance to undertake a 12 month work placement in Canberra beginning in 2016. Click [here](#) for more!

Indigenous Accountants Australia Initiative

Students with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait background who are interested in accounting can register to hear about jobs, news and events in the industry. Click [here](#) for more.

My Career Match

My Career match is a resource which aims to help students match their personality with a suitable career. The website contains advice on how to achieve an ideal career and resources to help build a profile showcasing your skills and talents. Click [here](#) for further information.

Important Dates for your Diary:

12th May - Careers Expo @ Hockey Stadium, Unanderra
13th June - TAFE Choices Day
26th June - Applications for Work Experience close for Year 11
1st July - BlueScope Cadetships for 2016 posted on their website
3rd August - UOW Early Admission Opens
29th, 30th June - BlueScope Cadet Snap Shot Days
12th-16th October - Year 11 on Work Experience

Careers Room, Room 54, open every Lunch 2.
Come visit, get motivated and be inspired!

Mrs Sue Kennedy,
Careers Advisor

Excursion Name	Date	Payment/ Permission Note Closing Date
Boys Swan Cup Gala Day	28 April	CLOSED
Wollongong Dio Cross Country	29 April	CLOSED
Yr 9 Retreat 2015	30 April	CLOSED
Australian Economics Competition	7 May	CLOSED
Yr 7 Geography Sydney Sea Life Aquarium	7 May	Fri 1 May
Australian Business Studies Competition	14 May	Tues 31 March
St Marys Annual Op Shop Ball Yr 12	15 May	Mon 11 May
NO LATE PAYMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED. PLEASE DO NOT PLACE INTO THE BOX AFTER CLOSING DATE		

Vinnies Van Good News Stories
Illawarra Homelessness Coordination

MARCH 2015

Bobby's Story

Bobby arrived on the doorstep early one morning last week, looking worse for wear, having heard about this service after attending the Vinnies food van the evening before. Bobby immediately provided information for a referral and received an immediate assessment of his needs along with some refreshments. Casework immediately commenced in relation to addressing his housing issues. Bobby reported to be living on the streets for the last two months, since being fearful to return to his Housing NSW property following a spate of break ins and threats by nearby residents. Bobby's vulnerability became evident through assessment which identified various issues, including mental health, intellectual disability, Grief and loss and changes to his tenancy circumstances as a result of his aged Mother being placed in a Nursing home, which reduced his self- efficacy.

Through advocacy with Housing NSW, arrangements were made to escalate an application for a property transfer and liaison with his Mental Health Nurse through Medicare Local, supported the process of advocating for the prioritisation of a transfer to promote his ability to stabilise his state of mental health. Through negotiation with Housing NSW, the application was processed and the necessary supports prepared for the transfer, including a referral to other support agencies to provide Bobby with ongoing Mental Health / disability supports. Bobby immediately felt a greater sense of security and wellbeing.

Robina's Story

Robina was referred through one of the local Vinnie's stores after presenting for some assistance with food items. Robina had been identified as being at risk of homelessness due to her remaining in a rental property that was not affordable, following her daughter moving out and getting married. Robina had advised the real estate agent of this; however they continued to offer her a lease renewal in joint names and accepting only her signature. Casework commenced through advocacy with the Real Estate agent and practical support was provided with rental applications, to Robina, who was experiencing high levels of stress and depression, all of which were reducing her capacity to plan and action her future options. After paying rent, Robina had \$35 per fortnight to live on and therefore in order to survive she had begun falling behind in her rent and a Tenancy Tribunal application had been lodged.

Through liaison with both Robina's current real estate agent and another agent who was advertising a more affordable rental property, Robina was encouraged to view and apply for tenancy which included a support letter from her caseworker and her application was accepted. Arrangements were made for immediate payment of a rental bond through brokerage which secured her this tenancy and through negotiation with her current real estate agent, the Tenancy Tribunal application was withdrawn, and her current bond reimbursement was allocated to pay for her rental arrears and eliminated her placement on TICA.

Paul & Mary

"Paul and Mary were both initially assisted through the Vinnies Van after presenting at the Wollongong site after receiving some food and drinks as they had been travelling on trains through the nights as an alternate accommodation option. Between their two benefits they could only afford to pay for temporary (motel) accommodation for several nights on their pay week then would purchase train tickets for the rest of the time left before their next pays. This was creating escalating ill health and mental and emotional stress. Through the contact of the Vinnies Van they were referred to our newly formed Homelessness Coordination Centre in Coniston and were supported with brokerage to enter into interim/long stay accommodation at Oasis Resort/Van Park which was affordable and met their needs. Since there they have been supported by Vinnies to get set up with basic household items but more importantly linked into other Specialist Services particularly around chronic, and life threatening medical needs. Without this timely intervention that they received through Vinnies the consequences for this couple would have become dire. The physical and emotional stress that both Paul and Mary were under when they presented at the Vinnies Van had escalated to becoming life threatening. They had no options left, were emotionally and physically spent and had made a pact to 'give up'. They were overwhelmed with appreciation for Vinnies being there at Wollongong train station the night they had lost all hope.

St Joey's Social Trivia Night

2015



\$10

per head

8 - 10

per table

(18 years and over)

Friday 29th May
School Hall
7pm - 10pm
Doors open 6:30pm

Tickets purchased at the School office

Ph: 4230 8500

Book your table by
Friday 22nd May

BYO Drinks & Supper

Run & supported by:
St Joseph's P&F
Association

Prize for the best themed table.
So dress it up people!

Parenting *ideas* INSIGHTS

Building parent-school partnerships

WORDS Michael Grose

Helping students get ready for the NAPLAN tests

The most resilient children and young people are those who rise to meet rather than retreat from the challenges presented to them. Perhaps it's best to view the NAPLAN tests as good learning experiences rather than dreaded pressure tests.

During the second week of May Australian children in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 will take part in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). The stated purpose of this testing program is to gain an overall picture of educational attainment levels to assist education policy and decision-making.

The program first implemented in 2008 has drawn some criticism from a number of different quarters, particularly in regard to the use of the information gained through the NAPLAN tests. You've probably heard a number of different viewpoints expressed in the media over the last few weeks.

One view commonly put forward is that the NAPLAN tests put undue pressure on children to perform in test situations. If so, then perhaps the best approach for parents and teachers is to help them handle the pressure rather than avoid it. The most resilient children and young people are those who rise to meet rather than retreat from the challenges presented to them. Perhaps it's best to view the NAPLAN tests as good learning experiences rather than dreaded pressure tests.

Children and young people take their cues from their parents about how to handle many situations. American psychologist Martin Seligman discovered more than a decade ago, through his research into children's thinking styles, how closely a child's explanatory style

mimics that of the parent they spend most time around. Optimistic parents beget optimistic kids, just as anxious parents can beget anxious kids. The impact of a parent's explanatory style seems to be magnified somehow in small families where there are fewer voices to be heard.

As a parent it helps your child, if you take a positive view of the NAPLAN tests. It's better to see them as learning opportunities for kids as well as opportunities to overcome any anxieties or nerves that these tests may bring on. It's also worth remembering that many children don't stress over these tests. The vast majority take them in their stride, wondering what all the fuss is about.

Whether your child stresses or takes them in his stride here are some tips to help prepare for the NAPLAN tests:

1 Take your cues from your child:

If your child doesn't worry about them then neither should you. Be careful not to create a problem that doesn't exist by incessantly talking about, or worse, worrying about the test.

2 Focus on doing their best and trying hard:

Choose your words carefully when you speak with your kids. As with all their learning activities place your focus squarely on effort rather than results. The only pressure on kids should be to try hard rather than to do well.

3 Listen to any concerns they have:

If your child confesses to some nerves then validate their feelings, rather than shut them down with a 'get over it' response. "Yes, sometimes tests can be a little scary, but they get easier every time you take them." Use this as an opportunity to develop some emotional smarts, which starts with recognising how kids feel.

4 Give them some relaxation ideas:

Anxious or nervous kids will benefit from some simple relaxation strategies. Taking some deep breaths, changing their thinking and exercising the morning of the test are some simple ways to help kids get some feeling of control.

5 Help them retain their perspective:

One way to help children who become excessively anxious about an event is to ask what's the worst thing that could happen? Okay, they may not do as well as they would like but the sun will still rise tomorrow, regardless of how well they do. Keeping perspective is a life skill that we all need to practise.

A positive, caring parent attitude is one of the best gifts you can give a child when they are apprehensive or nervous about approaching any different situation whether it's going on school camp, joining a new club or sitting a NAPLAN test.



Stay one step ahead of your kids with great ideas & expert advice from Michael Grose. Join Michael's **NEW Parentingideas Club** today at parentingideasclub.com.au. You'll be so glad you did.



parentingideas.com.au

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ILLAWARRA COAL REGIONAL CAREER EXPO 2015



Discover
the options
...get inspired

SCHOOL SESSIONS

TUESDAY MAY 12TH

8.45AM TO 3.30PM

WEDNESDAY MAY 13TH

8.45AM TO 1.30PM

PUBLIC SESSION

TUESDAY MAY 12TH

3.30PM TO 5.30PM

Illawarra Credit Union Sports And Hockey Stadium Waples Rd, Unanderra

Find out all of the info and friendly advice you need to inspire your future career decisions. The Careers Expo provides local and national representatives from Unis, TAFE, Defence Forces, Training Organisations and Employers

PRINCIPAL PARTNER

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Coal**

MAJOR PARTNERS



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