Dear Parent and Caregivers

Welcome back to Term 2 with chillier mornings and cloudier skies. It is hard to fathom that a week ago, I was still wearing t-shirts and open shoes. I do have to say that the colour changes in the landscape are really beautiful. I trust that you had a wonderful break with your family and friends.

Term 2 has a number of events happening that are listed on the calendar. In week 3 NAPLAN (National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy) occurs. NAPLAN tests the sorts of skills that are essential for every child to progress through school and life, such as reading, writing, spelling, grammar and numeracy. It is important to remember that NAPLAN tests are not pass/fail tests. NAPLAN tests provide very valuable information, but there are no consequences for individual students for poor or good performance. At the classroom level it is one of a number of important tools used by teachers to measure student progress. NAPLAN is not a pass or fail type test, and is designed to illustrate the range of student performance across the country. Individual student performance is shown on a national achievement scale for each test. The performance of individual students can be compared to the average performance of all students in Australia. It is not expected that all students will be able to answer all questions correctly. Schools will receive NAPLAN reports for their students by mid-September and then they are sent home. The same report format is used for every student in Australia. NAPLAN tests are for Year 3, 5 and 7 students and are scheduled for 13th – 16th May.

Later this term a whole school excursion to the Perth Hills Discovery Centre occurs on Monday 23rd June. This excursion is considered to be an integral aspect of the student learning program for History.

In the last week of term is a whole school NEXUS Science show which is guaranteed to excite all children about the magic of science.

We finished off a very busy first term with the official unveiling of the new jumps pit on the oval and new shade shelters. Three large faction shelters and a P&C shelter was purchased from the funds raised in last year’s walkathon. These shelters will keep children protected from the wind (they all have attachable side walls), rain and sun. The jumps pit has needed to be ‘fixed’ for a number of years. Mrs Witcombe was called upon to cut the ribbons declaring the jump pit open and Mrs Charman performed the first long jump on the new pit! Thank you.

MISSION STATEMENT

Sawyers Valley Primary School aims to create and foster an environment where students become independent learners, enabling them to take responsible control of their lives and contribute meaningfully to society.
you to the ongoing support of the community and the P&C with the upgrading of school facilities. Thank you also to the P&C who provided a free sausage sizzle and icy pole to all students as part of the celebrations.

In light of NAPLAN in a few weeks, I have included an article from Maggie Dent, who is an author, parenting and resiliency educator. There are some powerful messages for all children and parents.

Happy calm children learn the most

All parents want the best for their children - we want them to grow up healthy, happy, strong, kind and to live a meaningful life as adults. We want them to be able to manage living in our chaotic world and avoid becoming overwhelmed by the speediness and busyness of modern life. One of the best ways to do this is calming our children’s lives. Stress is a new health and social contributor to challenge children in our modern world.

The “hurried child” and the over-scheduled child are both modern developments. Somewhere over the last 10 years parenting has become a type of competition and the hidden stress this places on growing children causes many other issues that delay healthy development and growth on all levels emotionally, socially, mentally and cognitively. We have sped up the pace of life and living. We live in an instant world where we expect everything NOW. Communication, food, pain relief, results, well-behaved children - you name it, we expect things instantly. This expectation works silently and unconsciously creating stress when things do not always happen like that. Children take all of childhood to grow - to learn how to think, learn, process information, behave appropriately - manage their lives, dress themselves, find their way home and learn who they are! We cannot rush this vital development.

Daniel Goleman in his now-famous book, Emotional Intelligence, wrote that “happy, calm children learn best”. Homes that consciously create calm and quiet times are building enormous support structures that will help children feel safe, allow them to enjoy their own quiet company and lower the stress levels within their growing bodies. The over-exposure to TV and screens is over stimulating many little minds and bodies.

I recently read Bruce Lipton’s book on The Biology of Belief. In this book he wrote that babies’ and toddlers’ brains download everything they hear and see from TV - even when they may appear to not be paying attention. That means all the violent images and stories on the news and other adult programs are downloaded into their memory banks - and because they are so vulnerable, it causes them to skew the way they see the world. Please avoid TV as much as possible in the early years and then be very vigilant on what programs your child’s sensitive minds watch or are exposed to. Also keep your noise levels down in the home - voices, radios and volume to TV.

Dr Stuart Shanker has an important key message for all of us who work with families and that is that children’s capacity to self-regulate largely determines how well they will perform at school, much more than whether they can count, or be good at picture recognition or colour-in within the lines.

Dr Shanker has discovered in his research that children differ greatly in how they use energy. There are many things that will sap a child’s energy: poor attachment to mother, over-scheduled lives, overstimulation, poor sleep patterns, too much TV/screen time, low-quality food, lack of predictable routines and boundaries, abuse, shouting, shaming, and unrealistic expectations.

Children need to be in a relaxed calm and focused state to be able to play and to be able to learn. Dr Shanker believes that kids vary how much “gas” or energy they have in coping with life. If a child is struggling with stress, abuse or feeling disconnected they will have less energy to learn, to think and to be happy.

According to Shanker’s six levels of energy, he says kids need to be in level four to be able to play, to concentrate and to learn.
1. Asleep
2. Drowsy
3. Hypoalert
4. Calm, focused and alert
5. Hyperalert
6. Flooded

To read the rest of the article, click here.

**Blessing of the Roads**
For the second year running, Sawyers Valley PS was invited to participate in the Blessing of the Roads in Mundaring. This event is a joint venture between the local school chaplains and the local emergency services that assist in accidents that occur on our roads. Our school choir was asked to sing and did a beautiful rendition of Lanterns (of Birds of Tokyo fame). Our school captains laid a wreath and responded to questions about road safety. Some of the children were treated to an inside look of an ambulance.

We also trialled a new parent teacher meeting format at the end of the term by closing the school for a half day and parents and carers selecting 10 minute interview time. Points discussed during the meeting were noted and parents and teachers signed the notes page. Staff have provided feedback about the new format and now we ask for your feedback. To complete the feedback, click on the link below. The survey will be open until **Wednesday 7th May**.

Parent teacher meeting survey

Leanne Sheardown
Principal

**VICTORIAN CLASSROOM– our exciting resource!**
The first school is visiting us very shortly and we are in **urgent need of parents** to assist on the day by helping the teachers leading the activities. The visiting school is of course paying for the privilege of using our facilities and the money will go towards the education of YOUR children at Sawyers Valley PS. The role will not be onerous and in fact you will be acting as a quasi teacher assistant, supporting children as they run through the activities. It also should be a lot of FUN and I urge you to consider it. Unfortunately I will be overseas on holiday but will be involved with other school visits as they come to hand. For more information, please see Ms Sheardown or Steven Powell.

Best wishes
Marian Gard
Helping kids to choose wisely

It can be more than a little frustrating for adults when kids don’t think through the consequences of their decisions, say, when they ‘forget’ to do their homework or ‘accidentally’ hurt their younger sibling playing too roughly.

The younger the child is, the more likely they are to focus on satisfying their immediate wants (ie eating lollies just before bed) and the less likely they are to consider the outcome (ie the inevitable sugar-high preventing a proper night’s sleep).

Rather than telling them what they should do, you can step children through the process of making good decisions so they can master this important life skill. Here are some expert strategies.

Little Kids

Little kids Consequences need to be simple for young children, but early childhood is nonetheless an excellent time to start teaching them about choosing wisely.

Give them chances to make simple decisions
“Would you like to wear your red jeans or your spotty skirt today? Which is better for climbing trees?”

Encourage problem-solving
“Oh no, we’ve run out of bread for sandwiches! What else could we have for lunch?”

Allow them to make mistakes
“It’s nice that you wanted to make a cake for Daddy, but next time you need a grown-up to help you, okay?”

Tell stories about good and bad decision-making
“Do you think Goldilocks did the right thing going into the bears’ house without being invited?”

Older kids

School-age children are better able to see other viewpoints and anticipate consequences.

Step them through the decision-making process
“Okay, this is the issue, now what are our options? Which is the best choice? Why? Alright, let’s give it a go and see what happens!”

COMMUNITY NEWS

The school is often asked to include community news or additional information sheets with our newsletter but please be aware that the school does not necessarily endorse or recommend these particular services.

NEW DANCE SCHOOL MALAGA… 1st Floor 173 Mulgul Rd Malaga ph: 040 6752 743
Classes in Hip Hop/Bellydance/Flamenco/Fitness/Weight loss/Core. Opening special $40 per month for first 3 months of tuition (students of school keep the special price). Check out Raqs Zahara Website www.raqszahara.com.au for more information class descriptions and timetables.

TAEKWON-DO SELF DEFENCE CLASSES… Monday/Wednesday Parkerville Hall. Contact Derrick 0407 191 167
FREE two day workshop and information sessions for PARENTS/CARERS of school age students on the autism spectrum

The Positive Partnerships initiatives have been developed and delivered by Partnerships between Education and the Autism Community (PEAC) and funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, through the Helping Children with Autism package.

What will you learn?
As a result of participating in the workshops and information sessions as parents/carers you will gain:
- a greater understanding of the impact of autism on your child, both at school and at home
- knowledge about how to develop effective parent, school and teacher partnerships
- specific strategies on how to:
  - advocate for your child
  - support your child’s participation at school
  - develop an awareness of ongoing learning needs
- information about your local school system’s processes
- opportunities to network and share strategies with other parents/carers and key community members
- opportunities for discussion around a range of topics relevant to students with an ASD and their families

Some key community representatives that support families living with autism will be identified and invited to participate in the workshop with a view to supporting a community focus beyond the workshop.

Workshop details
Venue: Rose & Crown Hotel
105 Swan Street, Guildford WA 6055

When: Two day workshop – Tuesday 3 & Wednesday 4 June 2014
Day 1: 9.00 am - 4.30 pm (Registration from 8.15 am)
Day 2: 9.00 am - 3.30 pm

Registration opens Tuesday 8 April 2014 and closes 2 days prior.
Registration may stay open until one day before the workshop if spaces are still available, but we strongly recommend that you register as soon as possible.
You will receive a confirmation of your registration.
Online registrations preferred: please go to the website www.positivepartnerships.com.au.

Please see the red pinup board in the Wet Area for more information and registration details
City of Swan Hosts
FIFO Family Week
Connecting FIFO families with services, resources and other families in your community

Monday 19 May 2014
FIFO workshop
9.30am-11.30am
This workshop offers practical tips that help families make the most of their time together and remain connected during times apart.

Nicole Ashby FIFO Families
Stephen Gallagher Ngala

FIFO families expo
11:30am– 1:00pm
An opportunity to meet other FIFO families and services to support the working away lifestyle.

Aveley Community Centre
10 Bolero Road Aveley
(next to Aveley Primary School)

Limited Spaces
Book Now
www.fifofamilies.com.au
Crèche facilities available
Bookings essential

city of swan
FIFO Families
myfifo family
Ngala Parenting with Confidence
Mums Raising Boys - up to the age of 12 years

However well-prepared mothers are logically, the emotional response to having a boy is often still, ‘Wow! This is unknown territory.’ It is true that for many mothers, the idea of raising a son carries its own set of worries.

As the primary female role model in a boy’s life, mothers play an important role in the development of their son’s identity including their ability to be nurturing. This in turn affects how they relate to others, particularly to girls and women.

This workshop will discuss:
- The importance of the mother-son relationship
- What boys need from their mums
- Practical ways to improve and maintain a positive and rewarding relationship

Time: 6.30-9.00pm
Fee: $25 per person

Places are limited so please book now on 9489 6322

headwest Brain Injury Association of WA Inc.

Headwest the Brain Injury Association of Western Australia Inc. would like to invite you to take part in our brain injury awareness campaign called BANGONABEANIE. BANGONABEANIE is health promotions campaign that aims to raise awareness of Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) and also reduce the incidence of brain injury. This year BANGONABEANIE is being run from 11th to 17th of August 2014. The campaign encourages people to purchase and wear a bright blue beanie to help raise awareness of ABI in the community. There are a number of different events being run over the week - form Monday to Friday there will be displays popping up a many different WA locations. The finale on Saturday the 16th August is BANGONABARIE in Freo which will be an extravaganza of fantastic brainy science, brain flash mob, knitted neurons, music, food and fun all to raise awareness of brain injury and promote brain safety.

We need your help to make knitted or croquet brain neurons which we will then make into a hanging display to take with us during our weeks events. At the end of the week Headwest would like to donate the artwork to local school or hospital.

We would love to get your help to promote awareness about ABI and also reducing the incidence of brain injury. All you need to do is start knitting or croqueting. The pattern has been attached to this email.

If you would like to know more about the BANGONABEANIE campaign or about brain safety please let Headwest know – if you would like a member of our staff would be happy to come and speak to your school, group or organisation.

More information about ABI can be found on our website at www.headwest.asn.au

We look forward to seeing all of your beautiful neurons.

Thank you for your support.
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