Celebrating 21 years of inspiring learning

MACKILLOP SWIMMING CARNIVAL 2015

During the Second World War the American General Dwight Eisenhower would routinely walk amongst his troops. One day, as the soldiers were preparing to confront the enemy, Eisenhower noticed a young soldier who seemed very quiet and perhaps depressed. Eisenhower went up to the soldier and asked, “How are you feeling, young man?” “General,” the young man replied, “I'm extremely nervous. I was wounded two months ago and just got back from hospital yesterday. I don't feel so well.”

Many generals would have tried to buck up the soldier's spirit by saying, “You don't need to be scared; you've got the best army in the world behind you.” Instead, Eisenhower said, “Well, you and I are a great pair then, because I'm nervous too. Maybe if we just walk along together for awhile, we'll be good for each other.”

“We'll be good for each other” could be a slogan for just about any relationship but especially for the children-parents relationship. The words of the slogan suggest that we be genuine and human, that we share our uncertainties and that we be emotionally honest. No doubt the young soldier’s brief encounter with his General would have been positively for him and assisted him to embrace the future with hope, knowing that another person shared his feelings.

One of the responsibilities of being a parent is to be there for our children. With a full life ahead of them, our children will experience many of the things that we experienced on our way to adulthood. If we are not available when our children need us and they are left holding unsaid words or emotions, it is rather like shaking a bottle of champagne with the cork still in it, the bubbles have nowhere to go but back down inside; this can lead to frustration, anger and possibly depression.

No parent can be emotionally available all the time. Parents are only human and have plenty of problems of their own. However, “Research has repeatedly demonstrated that emotional connection is a crucial element in a parent-child relationship. The benefits of parents connecting emotionally with their children are far reaching. When parents are emotionally reachable and are able to ‘read’ the emotional signals of their children, the children will perform better in a wide variety of situations. Emotionally secure children and emotionally available relationships help children to become emotionally intelligent in their lives.”

Raising a Secure Child. Dr. Zeenp Birgen

There is little doubt that the degree and quality of our communication and connection to our children will play a significant part in their level of confidence, their ability to achieve well at school, their success in future relationships, their sense of security in a sometimes “scary” world, their life choices and how well-adjusted they become as adults.

PrINCIPAL

MACKILLOP CATHOLIC COLLEGE

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“Lord, we thank You for Your constant love and for the light of Your guiding Spirit. Help us to acquire an attitude of sympathetic understanding towards our children. Amen.”

COMMISSIONING ASSEMBLY

Last week we held our Commissioning Assembly at the College. The ceremony commenced with a Liturgy of the Word, with Father Peter O’Laughlin presiding. This was followed by the commissioning of Peer Support Leaders, House Captains and Student Leaders. This was a wonderful celebration and acknowledgment of student leadership in the College and a moment to be incredibly proud. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Father Peter, Mrs Linda Pollard, Mr Nicholas Lahey and Mrs Sue Howard for their organisation of the day. I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Miss Andrea Scott and the musicians and choir and Mr Ben Shaw and members of the Hospitality class for their contributions.

SWIMMING CARNIVAL

The annual Swimming Carnival was held a few weeks ago and on the whole it was a very enjoyable day. There was some great competition in the pool and support from the grandstand. Mrs Fiona Geappon needs to be commended for her organisation and preparation of the Swimming Carnival and staff thanked for their support and enthusiasm in providing a positive opportunity for students and parents.

I would like to congratulate Lochaber on a convincing win on the day. I applaud the leadership of the house captains, Daniel Webb and Sheridan Penwright. I would also like to extend my congratulations to the following students:

Swim Champions
Year 7 Girls: Elysia Visinlin
Year 7 Boys: Zac Barnett
Year 8 Girls: Samantha Richardson
Year 8 Boys: Keenan Wilcox
Year 9 Girls: Georgia Sy
Year 9 Boys: Clancy Vanderkelen
Year 10 Girls: Chelsea Clark
Year 10 Boys: Jacob Rugless

Runner-Up Champions
Year 7 Girls: Maddison Jackson & Caitlin Rugless
Year 7 Boys: Alex Contienna
Year 8 Girls: Mikyla Ait & Chloe Bennett
Year 8 Boys: Callum Nowacki
THE RICE RESOURCE CENTRE

As we have now completed the last phase of the building program we have opened the Rice Resource Centre to students. This centre comprises both our library services and Information Technology Centre. The Rice Resource Centre is a warm and welcoming space for students and staff to work or relax during the busy day. Students have access to computer facilities as well as a wide range of printed text. This area of the College opens at 8.15am and closes at 4.00pm (on Tuesdays it opens until 4.30pm). I encourage students to visit the centre over the coming week and introduce yourself to our new Librarian, Mrs Tricia Scott.

AFTER-SCHOOL TUTORING

Last year a number of staff gave their time to support our young peoples’ learning by offering to run tutorials after school. Starting Tuesday, March 10, from 3.15pm - 4.30pm, staff members have offered to open up this opportunity to any student in the College to work on assignments or classwork in a warm learning environment. The supervision will be on a rotational basis. Computer facilities will also be available. This is a great opportunity to catch up, get some extra help or just to get some home study out of the way before going home or to work.

UNIFORM COMMITTEE

As part of our practice of review and improvement we would like to form a committee of interested parents and students to look at possible areas of upward change. We would especially like to mention new designs for the boys’ summer shirt and the girls’ summer uniform and we would like to gauge parent support and feedback for these changes. I ask any parents interested in being part of this committee, which will meet during school hours, to email me - showard@mackillop.tas.edu.au

Please note that after a number of requests from students, girls will now have the choice of wearing socks or navy stockings with their winter uniform.
All socks worn with sport, summer or winter uniform should be plain in nature and logo free.

PARENTS WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Ways Parents Can work with Teachers (Michael Grose)

1. Know what your child’s teacher is trying to achieve.
2. Keep your expectations reasonable and positive.
3. Support your teacher’s expectations and activities at home.
4. Send kids to school ready to learn and on time each day.
5. Inform us early of your child’s challenges and changes;

- Respectfully seek joint solutions to problems and difficulties;
- Trust your teacher’s knowledge, professionalism and experience;
- Talk up what happens at school.

DUTY OF CARE

I ask for parent support in the use of student mobile phones in the College. The first point of contact for parents during the school day is through the College Office. Please do not contact your son or daughter via their mobile phone during the day, as our policy dictates that phones should be “off and away” between the first and last bell for the day. If students require contact with you during the day to check arrangements or if they are feeling unwell, contact with you will be made by our reception staff. I ask for your support in this matter as on a number of occasions students have phoned home, parents arrived and we were unaware of what has gone on to necessitate this call.

DUTY OF MINISTRY

So what are some of the indicators of a good work ethic within the learning context?

- Punctual attendance to class;
- Care and effective use of time within class;
- Active and effective presentation of work;
- Completion of all work on time;
- Communication with all learning requirements.

These are all indicators of a good work ethic that maximises the potential for learning to occur. Without recognition of the value of the learning to be undergone, without commitment to expend the time and energy required, the development of a good work ethic and hence the drive to achieve is restricted, whereas the tendency to develop work anxiety or to disengage with learning increases.

This underpinning development of a “good” work ethic is:

- The ability to clearly and effectively prioritise all tasks demanding time and energy – academic, sporting, social, or employment related;
- The ability to schedule adequate time for all competing demands.

The College assists students with these demands on their time and energies by offering after school tutoring as mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter. This tutoring is available on Tuesdays (3:15pm - 4:30pm) commencing on March 10 and provides opportunity for one-on-one tutoring of students, allowing them to keep up with the requirements in their subject areas and to complete assessment tasks in an effective and timely manner.

Dr John Snell
DIRECTOR OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

I had occasion last week to brief all year groups in the College regarding expectations around “work ethic”. As educators, we recognise that a good work ethic within the learning context underpins each student’s capacity to extend their understandings within the curriculum presented. We use it as a sign for the potential for progress to be made and most importantly as a gauge of the strength of commitment to learning by each student.

What are some of the indicators of a good work ethic within the learning context?

- Punctual attendance to class;
- Efficient and effective use of time within class;
- Care and effort spent in presentation of work;
- Completion of all work on time;
- Active listening to the teacher within the classroom;
- Conformance with all learning requirements.

These are all indicators of a good work ethic that maximises the potential for learning to occur.