



## Parent Engagement that makes a difference to a child's learning

Dear Parents/Guardians,

A very warm welcome back to our second week of learning! Our students and teachers have been working very hard to re-establish routines and student engagement after the school holidays. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all our students on the efforts they are making to take ownership for the improvement of their learning.

This term all our inquiry units of work focus on the Civics and Citizenship discipline, and considering it is a very special week in Australia's history, with the commemoration of the ANZAC the National day of remembrance and first landing of the Anzacs at Gallipoli, this aligns with the learning taking place in our classrooms. Research in education tells us that children learn best when they are highly interested, active and help make decisions about their learning. This week our students will have engaged in hands-on, sensory and real-life experiences about ANZAC Day.

This week our school community will reflect on the meaning of war and think about those who served our country. Some of the experiences we have planned for our students to commemorate and reflect on a real life world event, that is ANZAC day includes:

**Tuesday 24th April @ 9am** – Whole School Commemoration of ANZAC Day led by our School Captains. This included the reciting of 'The Ode', the playing of "The Last Post" and the laying of a wreath at the base of the Australian flag. In addition to this, Mr Gatt arranged a special guest speaker to talk to our school community about what it is like to serve Australia in a war and the idea of 'mateship'.

**Wednesday 25th April** – Representatives from our Junior School Council (JSC) attended the Dawn Service at the Melton Cenotaph to lay a wreath on behalf of our school community.

Our school community values and embraces all people and their respective histories. This week we embrace the commemoration of ANZAC Day and continue to enrich our understandings of the life and times of Australia and its people.



***"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much"*** – Helen Keller.

Warmest Regards,

Kathy Cvitkovic - Assistant Principal 3-6 Learning Community

## Getting it right in English!

### Reading and Technology- engaging our readers

We know many of our students are technological experts and own devices at home. One way we engage students during reading lessons is by providing opportunities to read and explore a range of online texts. This may involve researching information to answers questions or simply read for enjoyment.

Below is a list of websites and iPad apps used at school. These are free to visit or sign up to and can also be accessed from home.

Some of these websites and apps are more suited to students at specific reading developmental levels, while others provide engaging reading material for all.

Students may already have accounts to some of these sites. Please ask their teacher for their log in details.



[www.heraldsun.com.au/kids-news](http://www.heraldsun.com.au/kids-news)



[www.literacyplanet.com](http://www.literacyplanet.com)



[www.starfall.com](http://www.starfall.com)

**\*Also available as an iPad app**



[www.storylineonline.net](http://www.storylineonline.net)



<http://pbskids.org/games/reading/>



[www.teachyourmonstertoread.com](http://www.teachyourmonstertoread.com)

**\*Also available as an iPad app**

*Sarah Marshall*  
*Leading Teacher- Literacy*

## Marvellous Maths

Dear Parents

Every year children in grades 3, 5, 7 and 9 participate in NAPLAN (National Assessment Program-Literacy and Numeracy.) In 2018 the Numeracy Assessment will take place on Thursday May 17th. The year 3 assessment is conducted within a 45 minute timeslot whilst the year 5 assessment is over 50 minutes.

The Numeracy test assesses students on fractions, shapes, place value, transformations, maps and locations, and real-world problems. The test format varies, however in general questions are multiple-choice or require a short written response. NAPLAN numeracy is not a test of content. It tests skills in numeracy that are developed over time through the school curriculum and every day in the classroom.

A fear of the unknown can contribute to uneasiness and anxiety in the lead up to NAPLAN. To help reassure your child, we take them through practice tests leading up to the tests. It is a simple way to give your child the opportunity to see the style of the test before taking it on the day, and help them realise that there is no need to be afraid.

Teachers at Melton West ensure that students are familiar with the test formats and provide appropriate support and guidance. Excessive preparation is not useful and can lead to unnecessary anxiety.

NAPLAN tests are constructed to give students an opportunity to demonstrate skills they have learned over time through the school curriculum, and NAPLAN test days should be treated as just another routine event on the school calendar.

The best way you can help your child prepare for NAPLAN is to reassure them that NAPLAN tests are just one part of their school program, and to urge them to simply do the best they can on the day.

Kind regards  
Jennifer O'Connor  
Assistant Principal P-2 Learning Community



# insights



## Understanding your child's anxious behaviour using the ABC method

by Dr Jodi Richardson

*When our children are suffering they turn to us for help. Never is this more true than when they're experiencing anxiety. The experience of it is awful and they want it stopped. Now. That's all we want too: to put an end to their fear, dread and worry. To help them feel calm, happy and playful again. But the contagious nature of anxiety means that while, as parents, we're helping our children in the midst of their turmoil, we can also struggle with anxiety of our own. All those stories begin to swirl around in our minds leaving us worrying about what it all means for our child's future happiness.*

The more you understand about the events that trigger anxiety in your child and the way he or she behaves when feeling anxious, the better equipped you'll be to respond in a truly helpful way.

### The fight, flight, freeze or freak out response

It's important to remember that all of our kids will experience anxiety at some time or another. It's a natural and protective reaction to the anticipation of danger or discomfort, a deeply ingrained instinctive response that gears people up, big and small, to **fight** for their life, or run for it (**flight**). As well as the 'fight or flight' response, it's also been called the 'fight, flight, freeze or freak out' response. No argument there!

In the majority of cases where kids experience anxiety (which may even be trepidation or nervousness) – such as when faced with a maths test or a presentation in front of the class – when the 'danger' passes the anxiety passes too.

However there are kids who experience debilitating anxiety on a more regular basis: anxiety that interferes with their ability to function, participate in life and enjoy being a kid. In these cases it's important to develop a deeper understanding of the events that happen before and after the anxiety is displayed. The ABC anxiety technique is an invaluable tool used by psychologists when looking at behaviour patterns.

You can use it too.

### The ABC technique

Anxiety can be thought of as a sequence of events, beginning with a triggering event that is called the **A**ctivator. The Activator is present before your child becomes anxious and fearful. It isn't always one thing but can be a set of circumstances or factors like tiredness and hunger. Children won't always be aware of what's triggered their anxiety but as you begin to note down the ABC's, you'll establish some patterns that will help you both.



The activator triggers your child's anxious **B**ehaviour. Now's about the time you might form a picture in your mind of what you witness when your little one is anxious. You'll see a whole bunch of behaviours including avoidance, anger, fear and distress, but what you won't necessarily see are the 'private' behaviours of your child such as their thoughts and feelings. Understanding these is really insightful.

Lastly, your little one's anxiety will naturally bring about a reaction from others. This can be from you, other family members, your child's friends and/or their teacher, depending on where they are. These reactions are the last part of your new tool, termed **C**onsequences. Understanding what happens in response to your child's anxiety is important, again, for understanding patterns that have built up over time.

Start by creating a table (anyway you like) similar to the one below but include more rows in yours.

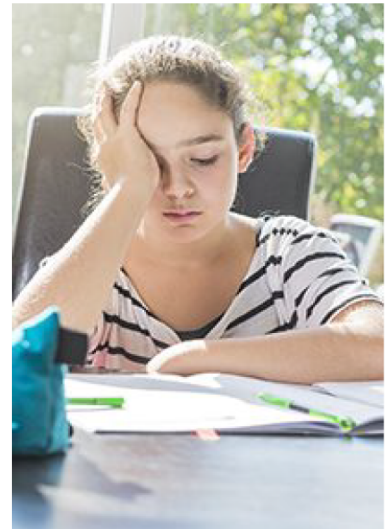
Find a quiet few minutes and begin by thinking about what happens when your child becomes anxious. Describe anxious behaviours in detail in the middle column. These could be the things you witness such as crying, pacing, avoidance, clinging, etc. plus any thoughts or feelings your child has shared with you.

Let's say for example that thunderstorms trigger anxiety in your child. Their behaviour might include fear, crying, an upset tummy and hiding away from the noise. Find a quiet few minutes and begin by thinking about what happens when your child becomes anxious. Describe anxious behaviours in detail in the middle column. These could be the things you witness such as crying, pacing, avoidance, clinging, etc. plus any thoughts or feelings your child has shared with you.

At first glance the activator might seem obvious: thunder and lightning in this example. But perhaps the anxiety is triggered earlier than that. Could it begin with overhearing the storm forecast on the news or the heavy rain preceding the storm? Finally, the Consequences column is to note what happens immediately after the anxious behaviour. What happens, and how everyone feels.

Go through this same process with the other anxious behaviours you listed. There are some examples on the following page.

The ABC exercise enables you to contemplate your child's anxious behaviours and the circumstances around them including, importantly, when you're not actually in the thick of it. My guess is that you're already pretty clear about the behaviours, but after doing this exercise you'll be armed with details of the triggers (Activators) and outcomes (Consequences) as well. Combined, this understanding will give you insights into how anxiety unfolds for your child, an opportunity to reflect on your own responses to anxious behaviour, and where there might be opportunities for helpful change.



If at any time you're at all concerned about your little one, please consult with your GP to seek advice and reassurance.

## Example ABC table and anxious behaviours

Activators	Behaviours	Consequences
Thunderstorm forecast	Upset tummy, cries and hides in bedroom, won't get ready for school	Repeated reassurance, gently encouraging to get uniform on and have breakfast. Only makes things worse. Late for school, again. Feeling frustrated.
Teacher announces upcoming test	Irritable, keeps repeating "I'm going to fail", headache	Suggested making a plan to prepare for test, rejected. Consoling with arm around her telling her it's going to be okay. Both feeling really upset.



### Dr Jodi Richardson

*Jodi is a happiness and wellbeing speaker and writer, and is mum to two primary school aged kids who light her up. For more great ideas on flourishing mental health for the whole family, subscribe to her newsletter at [drjodirichardson.com.au](http://drjodirichardson.com.au) and say hello on [facebook.com/DrJodiRichardson](https://facebook.com/DrJodiRichardson). Enquiries to [jodi@drjodirichardson.com.au](mailto:jodi@drjodirichardson.com.au)*

### A Word from Our School Vice Captains

Dear MWPS,

On the 17th April, some of our grade 6's went to Somers Camp and had an amazing time. We learnt so many new things and made some new friends.

On Tuesday 24th April we had a special "ANZAC" assembly led by our school captains and Mr Gatt who spoke about his experiences for ANZAC DAY. Thankyou to Bill Tewson who attended our assembly as a guest speaker. We laid a wreath under our Australian flag.

**LEST WE FORGET.**

Samantha And Jackson.

