



6th September, 2018

## *Partners in Learning Newsletter*

### *Moving forward With the Passion to Succeed*

#### EVERY DAY MATTERS

Dear Parents/Carers,

If your child is sick or absent, you are required to notify Melton West PS as soon as possible on the day of absence using one of the following methods:

1. **Telephone:** the school office and let the staff know your child's name, class, date of absences and reason.
2. Contact the school using the **Skoolbag app**.
3. **In person:** contact the school office and provide the staff with your child's name, class, date of absences and reason.

Notifying the school of your child's absence either prior to, or on the day that they will be away, helps ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and will fulfil your legal responsibility.

#### **Why do I need to notify the school if my child is absent?**

We need to know when and why a child is absent and you need to know if your child isn't at school.

From the end of Term 2 2018, all Victorian government schools have been required to contact parents/carers as soon as practicable on the same day of an unexplained student absence. You will receive an SMS if your child is absent on a particular day and you have not contacted the school to explain why, the absence will be marked as unexplained.

This system also promotes daily school attendance. Going to school every day is the single most important part of your child's education, they learn new things every day – missing school puts them behind.

#### **What is your responsibility?**

You are legally required to ensure your child attends school every day or you must provide an explanation for their absence. You should let the school know in advance of any upcoming absences or let them know in the morning if your child won't be at school. In order for schools to implement the same day notification requirement, it's essential that you provide the school with your most up-to-date contact details.

Generally one notification will be sent per family. Should there be circumstances that require both parents and carers to be notified, please contact the school to make the necessary arrangements.

#### **What is the school's responsibility?**

The school must notify you of an unexplained absence in relation to your child as soon as practicable on the same day.

Melton West PS will let you know by SMS. If you can't be reached because the school does not have your correct contact details (i.e. changed phone number, SMS failure notification received etc.), the school will attempt to make contact with any emergency contact nominated on your child's file held by the school. Where possible, this contact will be made on the same day of the unexplained absence.

#### **Where can I learn more about the process for managing student absences?**

Ask Melton West PS for a copy of the Attendance Policy which outlines the school's processes and procedures for monitoring, recording and following-up of student absences.

Jennifer O'Connor

Assistant principal P-2 Learning Community.

It is the mission of Melton West PS to work collaboratively to ensure high levels of learning for all.

## Getting it right in Reading!

### Gift of the Gab

The school holidays are approaching and while the weather is warming up, there are still lots of rainy days. That means that the kids will be spending lots of time at home. We know many children (and teachers!) love playing with their iPad/tablet, watching movies or playing video games on those wet, miserable days.

If you're after some other stimulating activities, why not continue to build their literacy skills, particularly speaking and listening.

Resnick and Snow said "...engaging in stimulating talk is the only way young children can expand their own language skills – learning words, putting sentences together, and practising the "rules of talk" (pg. 3). Here are some fun and creative ways to get children speaking in a productive and practical way.



### Morning Talk Show

Have your child take turns interviewing yourself or a sibling / friend about things that have happened over the holidays. You can also have your child report on the weather, what they had for breakfast or other daily activities. They could even use their iPad or tablet to record these and bring in the videos for Show and Tell next term.

### Guess what's in the bag

Place an item in a bag and get your child to feel it through the bag and decide what it is. Ask them to explain and justify their choice.

### Readers' Theatre

Scripts offer children the security of speaking as a narrator or character. Have your child practise reading the script and then when they are ready, get them to perform or record them. You can even go all out and include dress ups and props!

The following website has many freely available scripts. <http://www.aaronshep.com/>

### Conversation Cards

Each day give your child a card and ask them to share their responses to one of the questions.

<http://www.taoc.com.au/taocchildrens.html>



### Debates

Choose a topic and have your child debate the pros or cons. Some examples include: can they have dessert or not, getting a pet, having extra time to do something.



### Board games

There are some great board games that promote speaking and listening. These include: Scattergories Junior, Celebrity Heads, Cluedo and Guess Who.

*Sarah Marshall- Leading Teacher Literacy*

## **Simple Ways Parents Can Their Child with Mathematics**

1. Look for shapes and patterns in real life
2. Have your child measure ingredients for a recipe you are making
3. Ask your child to explain the math skills he or she is working on in school
4. When helping your child with homework or school projects, ask him or her to explain how he or she got an answer
5. Help your child find some appropriate number problem solving games to play online
6. Play card or board games that involve counting patterns
7. Ask your child to count change at the supermarket, or to estimate the total cost while you are shopping
8. Compare:  
Which is the tallest  
...the heaviest?  
...the smallest?  
...the fastest?  
...the hottest?  
...the most expensive?
9. Have tools such as a ruler, a scale, a calculator, and a measuring tape available to use in your house
10. Encourage your child to track or graph scores or stats for a favourite sports team
11. Use dice to make a game out of practicing math facts

**Point out ways math is part of “real” life:**

**Money, computers, music, art, construction, cooking...**

**All around us, every day.**



## Kids need good men in their lives

by Michael Grose

While rummaging through my bookshelves at home recently I stumbled across *Romulus, My Father* by Raimond Gaita, a book that had a huge impact on me as a father.

*Romulus, My Father* is a lovingly told memoir of a hard-working father who remained faithful to his family and friends despite his wife's affairs, her mental illness and dealing with the hardships of earning a living in 1950s and '60s rural Australia. It's a tale of love, friendship and character.

One line in the book, "*I know what a good man is because I saw it in my father,*" struck an instant chord with me. It was a reminder that kids need to have close experiences with men who have real depth of character and strength if they are to adopt those qualities themselves and also look for them in partners.

### Role models of quality

Sadly, children and young people are less likely to see these qualities in many of our current political leaders and other public figures. Self-interest and shallowness of character, at least in a public sense, seems to be standard fare at present.

Like Gaita, I had the good fortune to have a father who was also a good man. He wasn't wealthy, famous or ambitious. Rather he was kind, considerate and generous. He had experienced an unhappy and – I suspect though he never spoke of it – abusive childhood but he was determined that his children would never experience the same treatment that he received.

As a disciplinarian he was soft but that didn't mean he was a pushover. He'd stand his ground with his children over issues that really mattered, such as how we siblings treated each other, displays of dishonesty and disrespect, and taking shortcuts in our studies or with work. He was a community-minded man who, through his example, taught his children the importance of serving and giving to those who didn't have the same serving of luck that we did. He was also an involved father who, despite being busy, always had time to play cricket and football after work with my brother and me. He was never too busy for his children.

### A compass and a map

Significantly, my father gave me my moral compass in the form of the value system that he lived by. His many sayings including his most popular mantra: "If you can't say a good word about anyone don't say anything at all". That still rattles around in my head today. Through his active community involvement, his devotion to family and



his propensity to have a good laugh, he gave me a map to follow on how to live a good life.

I don't have a monopoly on being raised by a good man. If you were raised by a good man then count your blessings because you had a wonderful head start in life. Your task is to make sure your father's legacy lives on in your own children. You'll do that by being a man of strength and character, and by being a wise, loving presence in your children's lives whatever their age.

If, through whatever circumstance, you didn't have a good man close to you in your life as a child, then start the process with your own kids. Many men who have gone before you weren't close to their own fathers, or had fathers who were ineffectual, but they became great fathers despite their circumstances.

With public life increasingly producing male role models of dubious quality, it's up to dads and other significant males in the lives of children and young people to be good men, strong men and men of honour.

That's the legacy that we leave.

Happy Father's Day!



## Michael Grose

Michael Grose, founder of Parenting Ideas, is one of Australia's leading parenting educators. He's the author of 10 books for parents including Thriving! and the best-selling Why First Borns Rule the World and Last Borns Want to Change It, and his latest release Spoonfed Generation: How to raise independent children.



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