

### Screen Time

A huge hello to all members of our beautiful community. It's very hard to believe that we are approaching the end of first term already and preparing for holidays and the Easter break. As we get ready to move into holidays I thought it may be of benefit to explore screen time and the influence television, movies and video games may have on young children.

It's important to note that television, movies, video games and the internet can be a positive influence on your child. This is especially when:

- you get involved when your child is using them and help your child make good choices about what games to play or things to watch
- you get involved and talk with your child about what's going on in the game or program so he/she understands it
- your child uses good-quality content on screens – for example, playing a video game that involves solving creative puzzles to progress to higher levels
- using screens gives your child new ideas for traditional play – for example, playing Minecraft might get your child interested in designing buildings on paper
- using screens helps your child learn new skills – for example, doing a video about a school excursion might help your child learn video-editing skills.

### Risks of screen time

Screen time can have physical, developmental, safety and other risks. If you reduce the amount of time your child spends using screens, you can reduce the risks for your child.

#### Physical problems

Using screens can cause physical problems. For example:

- Looking at a screen for extended periods of time intensely can cause sore, irritated and dry eyes, headaches and fatigue.
- Looking down at a device can make your child's neck and spine uncomfortable.
- Being inactive for long periods using a screen can lead to a less active lifestyle, which could lead to obesity.

You can **reduce these risks** by encouraging your child to:

- regularly look away from the screen into the distance
- keep his neck upright when he/she is using a phone or tablet
- take regular breaks to get up and move around
- make physical activity part of his/her daily life.
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#### Development issues

Too much screen time can have an impact on children's language development and social skills. This is because children need real-life interactions to develop these skills. Too much screen time can also affect older children's development – for example, it can affect their ability to have conversations, maintain eye contact, pay attention in school or read body language.

Too much screen time can also result in children missing out on developing a wide range of interests, and the friends and learning associated with these interests. You can **reduce this risk** by making sure your child balances time spent using screens with other activities.

Warmest Regards,  
Kathy Cvitkovic – Assistant Principal (3 – 6 Learning Community)

***“Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible” – Dalai Lama***

## VICE CAPTAIN'S REPORT

Hello Melton West Community,

On Monday 18th March, we attended the National Young Leaders Day at the Melbourne Convention Centre along with Miss Moore and the school captains, Kalais and Mason. We got to meet Cal Wilson, Tim Diamond, Leisel Jones and Holly Ferling. They spoke about leadership and how we are all leaders and can make a difference to the world if we have a growth mindset. They inspired us with their stories, goal setting and passion to succeed. They encouraged us to embrace the 'scary but exciting', to step out of our comfort zone and just go for it.

It was a great day. We can't wait to implement our own passion project this year.

'If you don't take risks, you won't succeed' – Holly Ferling (Melbourne Stars)

Have a wonderful week,

Daniel and Akur



### Things to Remember

- ♦ **Harmony Day Casual Clothes Day: Tomorrow. 22nd March**  
**Gold Goin Donation**  
Please wear something orange or your cultural colours
- ♦ **Teeth on Wheels Forms due back Wednesday 27th March**
- ♦ **Easter Raffle Tickets– due back at office Wednesday 27th March. Raffle drawn at assembly on Friday 29th March**

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# Getting it right in Reading!

## Victorian Premiers' Reading Challenge 2019



**The Victorian Premiers' Reading Challenge is now open and Melton West Primary School is excited to be participating!**

The Challenge is open to all Victorian children from birth to Year 10 in recognition of the importance of reading for literacy development. It is not a competition; but a personal challenge for children to read a set number of books by 6 September 2019.

***Children from Prep to Year 2 are encouraged to read or 'experience' 30 books with their parents and teachers.***

P-2 teachers will be reading some of the PRC books to their classes and logging these on students' online lists. Students will also be encouraged to read these during daily independent reading.

***Children from Year 3 to Year 6 are challenged to read 15 books.***

3-6 students will be provided with opportunities at school to read PRC books as part of their daily independent reading. Opportunities will also be provided for them to individually log their books online.

**We REALLY value your support in taking up the challenge at home.**

All children who meet the Challenge will receive a certificate of achievement signed by the Victorian Premier and former Premiers.

To read the Premier's letter to parents, view the booklists and for more information about the Victorian Premiers' Reading Challenge, visit: [www.education.vic.gov.au/prc](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/prc)

This week you will be receiving a note with further detail regarding logging in online as well as your child/children's log in details to the Victorian Premiers' Reading Challenge (PRC).

*Sarah Marshall*

Leading Teacher- Literacy



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# Spotlight on Counting

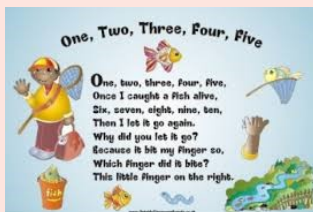
Counting is one of the first experiences of maths for young children. Learning the counting words often begins with a favourite song or rhyme and the repetition of the number names.

Listen for the counting sequence in these songs and rhymes:



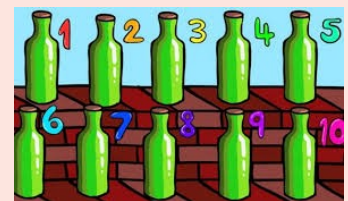
Five Little Ducks

Ten in the Bed



1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Once I Caught a Fish Alive

Ten Green Bottles



Five Little Monkeys



1, 2, Buckle My Shoe



As children move on to counting a collection of objects they begin to link each object with one number name. In the beginning, encourage your child to touch each object as they say the matching number's name. Children will begin by counting all objects in a group, for example, fingers and toes, the buttons on their clothes, steps to the house or their toys. When beginning to count a group of objects, children may arrange the objects in an order to help them. Later they will be able to start counting at any object to find the total. Some children will need to repeat the count of the objects if the arrangement has been changed, such as the blocks were in a row and now they are in a group. This can be a good way to explore the idea that the last number counted says how many there are in the group.

*Dani Bird*

Leading Teacher—Numeracy



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# insights



## Top five strategies to improve your parenting this year

by Michael Grose

The start of the year is a great time for making changes and improvements to the way you raise kids. But it's difficult to know where to begin.

To assist with the change process we've carefully selected five practical strategies that will have a positive impact if acted upon. We've organised webinars in the first half of the year to assist you to implement each strategy.

### 1. Switch on your child's strengths

Most of us have been conditioned to focus on what kids can't do. There is a better way. The Positive Psychology movement lead by US-based psychologist Dr. Martin Seligman showed that when we can unearth kids' strengths we are, in effect, unlocking their true potential for success and happiness. Three elements come together to make a strength and parents need to be mindful of all three: performance (being good at something); energy (feeling good doing it); and high use (choosing to do it).

Professor [Lea Waters](#), author of the wonderful new book *The Strength Switch* and current President of the [International Positive Psychology Association](#) will show you how to focus on kids' strengths in her webinar '[Switching on your child's strengths](#)'.

### 2. Balance kids' extra-curriculum activities

Alongside social media and news events, being busy is now recognised as a major stressor for many children and young people. The choice of activities to keep kids busy after school hours is mind-boggling.

Having so many options is wonderful but it does place a new set of pressures on parents and kids. The cost of loading kids up with scheduled activities is that many don't get the chance for free play, or simply 'vegging out' on the couch.

Parenting Ideas expert [Dr. Jodi Richardson](#) will help you find the right balance of activity for your family in her webinar '[Balancing extra-curricular activities](#)'.

### 3. Focus on friendships

Friendships are an important part of the road to adulthood for a child or young person. Friendships can also be

problematic. Not every child is naturally outgoing and makes friends easily. If your child has difficulty forming friendships and is worried by that, then there are many ways to approach this including: encouraging kids to spend one-on-one time with others, making extra-curricular activities fit their interests, and coaching kids to develop friendly behaviours.

The wonderful [Sharon Witt](#) will conduct a webinar '[Teach girls to build each other up](#)', focusing on friendship skills especially for parents of girls.

## 4. Give kids tools to manage anxious moments

Currently we have a childhood anxiety problem. A big one! And it's mostly undetected as community understanding of anxiety is low. It's our experience at Parenting Ideas that many parents are anxious and they don't know it, and many children routinely experience anxiety, which goes unrecognised.

Parenting Ideas founder Michael Grose is conducting a webinar '[Managing your child's anxiety](#)' to help parents on this challenging but important topic.

## 5. Develop rights of passage

Community changes have largely eradicated many traditional rights of passage, making it harder for a young person to know when they've become an adult.

Fortunately, many families are now creating their own to mark events such as the end of primary school, the move into the teenage years, and mark different stages of adolescence. These traditions are now becoming legitimate rights of passage for young people.

Internationally recognised expert on rites of passage Arne Rubenstein will outline practical ways you can recognise a young person's important life markers in his webinar '[Creating 21st century rites of passage](#)'.

## Will anything be different this year?

Change and improvement in anything worthwhile generally comes incrementally rather than in one giant leap. We've pointed you in the right parenting to take this year. With our webinars we've made it easy to take that vital first step. Have a great parenting year.



### 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*.

# HEALTHY EATING FOR CHILDREN

## Encouraging Healthy Habits

Childhood is a time of learning. Children who grow up in families that enjoy a variety of nutritious foods from the Five Food Groups are more likely to make their own healthy choices as they get older.



You can help children to develop healthy habits by teaching your whole family to

- Choose 'everyday foods' for home and school from the Five Food Groups.
- Save foods that are not essential or necessary to our diet for special occasions.
- Provide a variety of types and colours of fresh vegetables and fruit that are in season.
- Drink plenty of water instead of sugary drinks like cordial, energy drinks, sports drinks, fruit drinks, vitamin waters and soft drink.
- Eat a healthy breakfast every day.
- Try new foods and recipes- encourage children to get involved in cooking and preparing foods and drinks.
- Turn off the tv and electronic devices at meal times- make this family time.
- Be physically active- play outside, walk the dog or run around at a local park.

