

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Our teachers and students have now for some time been focusing on the notion of efficacy, both self and collective efficacy. Collective **teacher efficacy** refers to the 'collective self-perception that teachers in a school make educational difference to their students over and above the educational impact of their homes and communities. **Self -efficacy** refers to an individual's belief in his or her capacity to put in place behaviors necessary to get the desired outcomes. Self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to apply control over one's own motivation, behavior and social environment. Students with a strong sense of efficacy are more likely to challenge themselves with difficult tasks and be naturally motivated.

Increasing **student self-efficacy** is crucial to a student's success. As teachers, we can stimulate critical thinking and comprehension and therefore increase student self-efficacy through a variety of strategies such as conversation, questioning, positive reinforcement and increased availability.

Our teachers make themselves available to our students outside the regular classroom hours such as at break times and after school. These additional times our teachers spend with students allows for extra help to boost their understanding and confidence in work and themselves. In addition, I know we have teachers on staff who regularly attend week-end sporting events to watch their students compete, support them and reinforce their efforts back at school.

There are strategies that both parents and teachers can use inside and outside of classrooms to increase student self-efficacy. Some of these include:

- ⇒ Talking to your child about their school work and having them solve problems out aloud. This will help to slow down the process of critical thinking and analysis, encouraging deliberate thinking and reasoning.
- ⇒ Pose open ended questions that create conversation. Some prompts you can use to help with these questions include :
 - Tell me what you know about.....?
 - How might we break this problem into smaller steps?
 - Why do you think the author?

Remember the value of positive reinforcement and give your child **5 positives for EVERY 1 negative** remark or comment. Research tells us that for children to develop healthy sense of themselves as individuals they need to hear LOTS of positives. At school we have been focusing on **process praise** this means identifying the skill, understanding or knowledge a child has shown and then praise them. Some examples may include:

- Anna I can see you have cleaned your room thoroughly, your clothes are folded, toys put away and bed made. Well done. Great job!!!
- Ryan I can see you are managing your time well by starting your homework soon after you get home and doing a bit and then after dinner getting the homework out again and doing a bit more. Well done, Great work this will help you to succeed in meeting your goals.

The greatest thing in the world is to know how to belong to oneself".
Michel de Montaigne, The Complete Essays.

Warmest Regards,
Kathy Cvitkovic,
Assistant Principal

Hello everyone,

Last Friday we had a very successful fundraiser. It was wonderful to see our school community get behind Chloe's Challenge 2019 and raise much needed funds to support Dolly's Dream in implementing bullying programs in schools around Australia. We raised over \$600.00 by selling donuts donated by our local Woolworths and having a Wear Blue for Dolly Day. We would like to personally thank Maria Robinson, our School Council President, for the brilliant idea to sell donuts.

On Tuesday, the Student Focus Group met with Hayley from VicSRC, Mrs Cvitkovic, Miss Moore and Mr. Spud to continue their work with the Teach the Teacher Ignite Program. We are excited to be using Student Voice at our school and working with the teachers to ensure high levels of learning for all.

In other news, the Prep students are going to the Collingwood Children's Farm on Tuesday 18th June. Please make sure permission notes are returned and payment is made by Friday 14th June as no late payments will be accepted.

Have a wonderful week!

Daniel and Akur



PROTECT

Everyone has the right to be safe and be protected from abuse. No one should behave in a way that makes you feel unsafe or afraid, including anyone in your family, anyone at school or anywhere else in the community. Tell a teacher or any adult at your school if you feel unsafe.



Melton West Primary School is a Child Safe School

We hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school and base all our decisions on what's best for the students. Please talk to a staff member if you have any concerns about a child's safety at any time.

Getting it right in Reading!

Tools readers use to solve words

The ultimate goal of reading is to make meaning, to understand and to comprehend. To help them do this, readers of all ages use information sources known as cueing systems to help them solve words.

There are three information systems/cueing systems available for readers to access while reading:

1. Meaning (Semantic)
2. Structure (Syntactic)
3. Visual (Graphophonic)

Readers sometimes rely more heavily on one type of cueing system when solving words, for example, visual cues. However, successful reading involves using the three cueing systems together which is known as 'cross-checking'.

Below are some examples of these cueing systems in action. Some prompts you can use to support your child to use these cueing system while reading are provided below.

Meaning



This is the man who picked up the bag.

Does it make sense?

Try that again.

You said _____. Does that make sense?

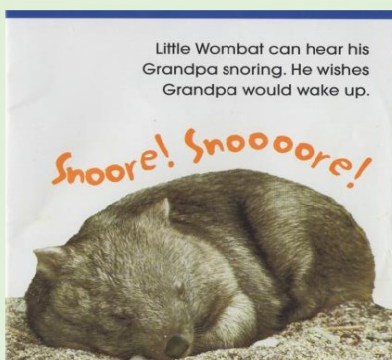
Look at the picture

Did that make sense?

Try _____, would that make sense?

What would make sense?

Structure



Little Wombat can hear his Grandpa playing.

Does it sound right?

Does it sound right?

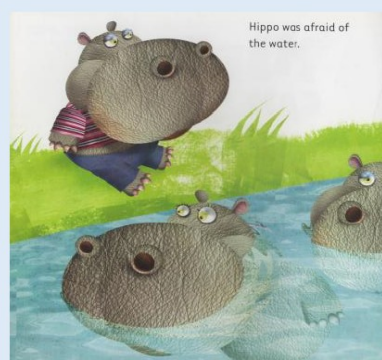
Is that how we say it?

Can you say it that way?

What would sound right?

Try _____. Would that sound right?

Visual



Hippo was friend of the water.

Does it look right?

Get your mouth ready to make the first sound.

What does it start with?

Slide through the whole word.

Can you see a part that you know inside the word, e.g. c a t

NB Must be a part that will help decode the whole word, e.g. c a t but not w a n t

Stretch out the sounds

Sarah Marshall- Leading Teacher Literacy

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

Maths at our house: going places

It is easy to turn “going somewhere” into a maths experience by being on the lookout for numbers, shapes and patterns.

These types of activities help to raise the awareness of mathematics in the environment and encourage your children to notice and figure out things. It can be practice of things they know or a challenge. A notebook in the car or in your bag can be a place where you ask them to write things down you notice as you are “going places.”

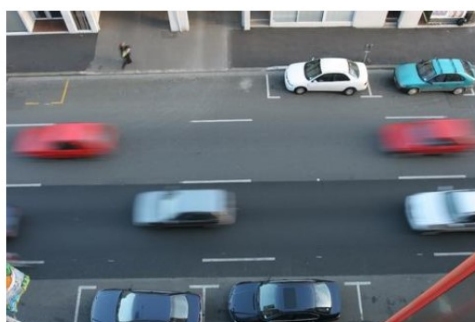
- Driving in the car
- Bus or train trips
- Walking to school or the shops
- **Number:** Find a number and use it as a “Launchpad” for counting backwards or forwards or in jumps of two or ten.



- **Patterns:** One day walk on the even number side of the street and the next on the odd number side. Notice which numbers are on the two sides.
- **Time:** Count the seconds while waiting for the light to change, notice anywhere there is a clock along the way.
- **Money:** Notice all the signs that have dollars on them: for example, petrol stations, supermarkets, and car yards.
- **Shapes:** Choose a shape and find objects in that shape along the way. You can choose two dimensional-shapes (circles, squares, rectangles, triangles etc) or three-dimensional objects (boxes, balls, cones, pyramids).



- **Statistics:** Choose one colour of car to count on the way. On the way home or the next time choose a different one. Keep going for several trips. What colour seems to be the most common? The least common?



insights



6 tips for parenting anxious kids

by Dr Jodi Richardson

If you're the parent of an anxious child you're most certainly not alone. The number of children experiencing an anxiety disorder is currently estimated at 117 million worldwide. Here in Australia, there's an average of 2 anxious kids in every classroom; and they're the ones with a diagnosis. Many more anxious kids are yet to have their anxiety identified and understood.

As much as we'd like to, we can't rid our kids of their anxiety, but we can help them to manage it in ways that enable them move it from centre stage and get on with living a vibrant, rich and meaningful life.

Here are 6 tips to support you to parent your anxious child:

1. Explain anxiety

Anxious kids can struggle to explain how they feel and can worry that no-one will understand what they're going through. That's why explaining anxiety is an important step in supporting an anxious child. The knowledge that anxiety is well understood, that other kids experience it and that it's manageable brings them immediate relief.

Teach your anxious child that the part of their brain that protects them from danger is always on high alert. Called the amygdala, it's meant to protect them from genuine danger but for anxious kids, it can be almost constantly activated.

Explain that when they feel anxious, their amygdala sends signals to their body to fight or flee from the threat, whether it's real or imagined.

Next, talk about the body changes such as increased heart rate, rapid breathing and an upset stomach that power them up to fight or flee. They might even feel dizzy, hot, sweaty and panicked. Anxiety affects thinking and behaviour too.

2. Respond with empathy

In the midst of an anxious moment it's natural to want to reassure anxious kids they've got nothing to worry about. Reassurance works in the short term but it soon wears off and they come back for more, which becomes an unhelpful pattern.

Instead, respond with empathy and validation. Use ahhh statements such as:

- "Ahhh, I see you're feeling really anxious right now, I know how hard this is for you"

- “Ahhh, I know you’re feeling really worried right now, it’s not much fun feeling like that is it?”

Anxious kids need to know you understand what they’re going through.

3. Show the amygdala they’re safe

Once the amygdala senses danger, the cascade of events that follow can’t be stopped. The body and brain will respond as if the danger is immediate. The best way to help an anxious child calm their anxious brain is to teach them to *show* their amygdala they’re safe. Deep and intentional breathing helps an anxious child to calm their amygdala and will begin to reduce their anxious symptoms. Practise intentional breathing regularly between anxious times before applying this technique in the midst of an anxious moment.

4. Practise mindfulness -the antidote to worrying

Anxiety is distress now about a possible future event, which is why worrying is common for anxious kids. When an anxious child’s mind fast-forwards to an upcoming event or expectation, their amygdala can respond as if the ‘threat’ to their safety is immediate. The antidote to worrying is mindfulness. Put simply, mindfulness is paying attention to what’s happening in the present moment. It may take time to learn, but is a powerful anxiety management strategy once it’s mastered.

5. Practice defusing sticky thoughts

Anxious thoughts can get stuck, refusing to budge no matter how much attention is paid to them. Defusion is a strategy that helps anxious kids look *at* their thoughts rather than *from* them.

Imagine your anxious child is worried about an upcoming test. They’re thinking “I’m going to fail the test”. The thought makes them feel awful. Defusion helps kids (all of us) to look *at their* thoughts by reminding them that the words in their heads are indeed just words, not reality.

Your anxious child can defuse his unhelpful thoughts by putting a statement in front of the thought such as: “I notice I’m having the thought that I’m going to fail the test.” Alternatively, he can say the thought in a character voice like Darth Vader or Peppa Pig, or sing it to the tune of happy birthday or a nursery rhyme. Defusion puts distance between anxious kids and their thoughts and is a wonderful skill to learn.

6. Get the fundamentals right

Ample sleep, good nutrition and exercise are essential for anxious kids. Support your child to adhere to their optimal bedtime so they wake naturally around the time of their alarm, reduce their sugar intake to support their gut health and to exercise regularly for optimal mental health.

These are some of the many strategies that you can share with your child to support them to recognise and manage their anxiety so they can live life in full colour.



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 and say hello on facebook.com/DrJodiRichardson. Enquiries to jodi@drjodirichardson.com.au