

Wentworthville Public School

QUALITY TEACHING TO MAXIMISE STUDENT LEARNING
Term 1 Week 6 2021 Newsletter



From the Principal – Denise Lockrey

Wonderful Happenings at Wenty!

Last week I needed to make the difficult (but correct decision given the thunderstorm that occurred!) to postpone the swimming carnival due to weather conditions. Whilst it is never an easy decision to make, I will always consider the safety and wellbeing of students and staff in making these decisions.

The swimming carnival organising team were able to swiftly act and secure a backup date with Merrylands Pool for this coming Friday – March 5 and we look forward to excellent weather!



Thank you to all the families who joined us on Zoom for our COVID safe Meet the Teacher in 2021 evening on Tuesday afternoon / evening. We appreciate your flexibility and it was a great opportunity to meet up with so many families and for classroom teachers to share what is happening throughout the year. Whilst we are sad our annual welcome BBQ component and sausage sizzle was not possible (Due to COVID conditions), we value your involvement this week as we partner together in educating your child /children.

(Continued on page 2)

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WENTWORTHVILLE NSW 2145 Australia

Phone: 02 9631 8529

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Website: www.wentwthvil-p.schools.nsw.gov.au

Email: wentwthvil-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Student Portal: <http://portal.det.nsw.edu.au>

(Continued from page 1)

Feedback from TTFM surveys 2020 re updating school logo

Last year, as part of the 2020 *Tell Them From Me* Surveys for staff, students and parents, we asked two school specific questions which gave us valuable feedback as we move forward as a school.

1. *There is an opportunity as we grow as a school to consider updating the current black and white school logo or emblem. Do you think we should update the current black and white logo or emblem? If so please explain why?*

Group	Number of responses	Yes	No	Neutral
Students	173	17%	78%	5%
Staff	24	46%	46%	8%
Parents	19	16%	84%	0

2. *How can Wentworthville Public School be the best?*

Key themes that came back from students included comments about: play spaces, canteen, clean toilets, solar charging docks for the iPads and selling socks and scrunchies in the uniform shop!



- ★ Amended Swimming Carnival note (new date Friday March 5) - Years 3-6



Building update!



G Block internals coming along!



My first visit to G Block and I am standing in the new library!!!



Ms Di Chio and I were so excited on our first visit to G Block this week –it is so very exciting and coming along well !

Shane the Crane in action!

And more concrete!!! Tiered seating emerging up middle of G Block area.



Yandina grass growing nicely too!

*Denise Lockrey
Principal*



PRINCIPAL AWARDS



Student	Class	Student	Class
Prajit	1K	Agasthya	2G
Ruthvikaa	2G	Vedanth	2G
Suvas	2G	Samridi	2G



OSH Club 
Outside School Hours Care

**JOIN US FOR SOME FUN
BEFORE SCHOOL, AFTER SCHOOL
AND DURING THE HOLIDAYS!**
Exciting new adventures every day.

Book online: oshclub.com.au



5/6W Journalism Studies

5/6W have been studying journalism, linking their growing knowledge and skills about the topic to develop their inaugural publication of '5/6W News' - Volume 1: February 2021 Edition. Each student contributed written articles that upheld the publication's motto of accurate and reliable reporting of news events from Sydney, Australia and around the globe.



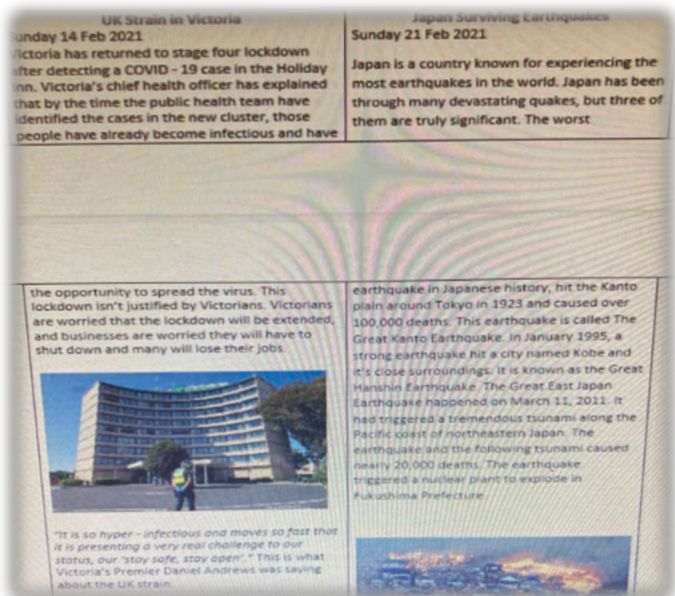
Students embarked on extensive research, investigating online media relating to diverse topics, based on personal interest and the relevance of news to our lives. Using an online class template, each student was required to list three links that would guide the development of expertise needed to write each article in their own words.

The experience highlighted the importance of journalists conducting fine-tuned research to enable factual reporting of news. A strong emphasis was placed on utilising and building on writing skills to engage and inform the target audience, adhering to a style befitting of a reputable newspaper.



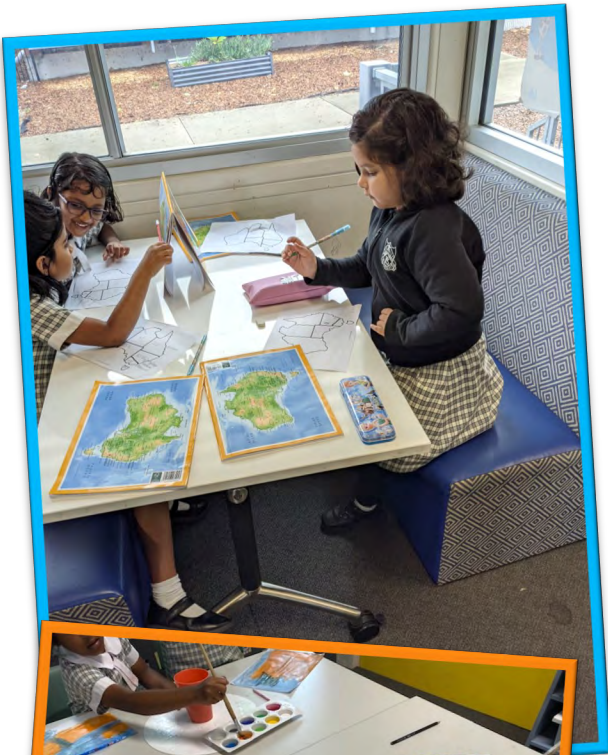
The class enjoyed the real-life, applied nature of the project and built a sense of appreciation for the multifaceted roles and responsibilities of journalists and media organisations.

Mr Williams



2H and 2M

2H and 2M have been developing their descriptive writing skills and using them to provide accurate descriptions of plants and animals in science. We have been conducting research about Australia and neighbouring countries. 2H and 2M created art works depicting the outback skies of Australia inspired by the wonderful book 'Mallee Sky' by Jodi Toering. The connections we have been making between subject areas are leading us to develop deep understandings.

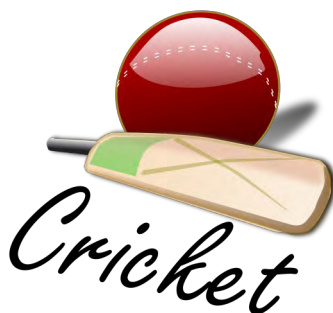


2021 PSSA Zone Sports Trials



WPS fielded two students at this year's Wentworthville-Seven Hills Combined PSSA Zone Trials.

Amogha (5/6B) and Devaj (5/6B) pulled, cut, drove, bowled and fielded their way through the cricket trials, competing against the best cricketers in the district for one of six places at the Sydney West cricket trials later this year. As can be seen in the photos, both boys possess special talents!



Summer PSSA

A special thanks to all the students who trialled for positions in 2021 summer PSSA teams. We wish students representing WPS all the best as they compete against neighbouring schools. Term 1 competition begins in Week 5 (February 26) and concludes in Week 9 (March 29) before recommencing in Term 4.

Sport/Team	Coach	Training (7.55am-8.30am)
Cricket Black	Mr Williams	Thursday
Cricket White	Mrs Bamunuarachchige	Friday
Newcombe Ball Black	Mr Middleton	Tuesday
Newcombe Ball White	Ms O'Sullivan	Tuesday
T-Ball	Ms Marchant	Friday
AFL	Mr Kranenburg	Thursday

PSSA Coordinator
Mr Williams

Compulsory School Attendance

Information for parents

Education for your child is important and regular attendance at school is essential for your child to achieve their educational best and increase their career and life options. NSW public schools work in partnership with parents to encourage and support regular attendance of children and young people. When your child attends school every day, learning becomes easier and your child will build and maintain friendships with other children.

What are my legal responsibilities?

Education in New South Wales is compulsory for all children between the ages of six years and below the minimum school leaving age. The *Education Act 1990* requires that parents ensure their children of compulsory school age are enrolled at, and regularly attend school, or, are registered with the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards for homeschooling.

Once enrolled, children are required to attend school each day it is open for students.

The importance of arriving on time

Arriving at school and class on time:

- Ensures that students do not miss out on important learning activities scheduled early in the day
- Helps students learn the importance of punctuality and routine
- Give students time to greet their friends before class
- Reduces classroom disruption

Lateness is recorded as a partial absence and must be explained by parents.

What if my child has to be away from school?

On occasion, your child may need to be absent from school. Justified reasons for student absences may include:

- being sick, or having an infectious disease
- having an unavoidable medical appointment
- being required to attend a recognised religious holiday
- exceptional or urgent family circumstance (e.g. attending a funeral)

Following an absence from school you must ensure that within 7 days you provide your child's school with a verbal or written explanation for the absence. However, if the school has not received an explanation from you within 2 days, the school may contact you to discuss the absence.

Principals may decline to accept an explanation that you have provided if they do not believe the absence is in the best interest of your child. In these circumstances your child's absence would be recorded as unjustified. When this happens the principal will discuss their decision with you and the reasons why.

Principals may request medical certificates or other documentation when frequent or long term absences are explained as being due to illness. Principals may also seek parental permission to speak with medical specialists to obtain information to collaboratively develop a health care plan to support your child. If the request is denied, the principal can record the absences as unjustified.

Travel

Families are encouraged to travel during school holidays. If travel during school term is necessary, discuss this with your child's school principal. An *Application for Extended Leave* may need to be completed. Absences relating to travel will be marked as leave on the roll and therefore contribute to your child's total absences for the year.

In some circumstances students may be eligible to enrol in distance education for travel periods over 50 school days. This should be discussed with your child's school principal.





My child won't go to school. What should I do?

You should contact the principal as soon as possible to discuss the issue and ask for help. Strategies to help improve attendance may include a referral to the school's learning and support team or linking your child with appropriate support networks. The principal may seek further support from the Home School Liaison Program to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan.

What might happen if my child continues to have unacceptable absences?

It is important to understand that the Department of Education and Communities may be required to take further action where children of compulsory school age have recurring numbers of unexplained or unjustified absences from school.

Some of the following actions may be undertaken:

- Compulsory Schooling Conferences

You may be asked, along with your child, to attend a Compulsory Schooling Conference. The conference will help to identify the supports your child may need to have in place so they attend school regularly. The school, parents and agencies will work together to develop an agreed plan (known as Undertakings) to support your child's attendance at school.

- Application to the Children's Court – Compulsory Schooling Order

If your child's attendance at school remains unsatisfactory the Department

may apply to the Children's Court for a *Compulsory Schooling Order*. The Children's Court magistrate may order a Compulsory Schooling Conference to be convened.

- Prosecution in the Local Court

School and Department staff remain committed to working in partnership with you to address the issues which are preventing your child's full participation at school. In circumstances where a breach of compulsory schooling orders occurs further action may be taken against a parent in the Local Court. The result of court action can be the imposition of a community service order or a fine.

What age can my child leave school?

All New South Wales students must complete Year 10 or its equivalent. After Year 10, and up until they reach 17 years of age, there are a range of flexible options for students to complete their schooling.

Working in Partnership

The Department of Education and Communities recognises that working collaboratively with students and their families is the best way to support the regular attendance of students at school.

We look forward to working in partnership with you to support your child to fulfil their life opportunities.

If a student misses as little as 8 days in a school term, by the end of primary school they'll have missed over a year of school.

Further information regarding school attendance can be obtained from the following websites:

Policy, information and brochures:

Please visit the Department of Education's *Policy library*

The school leaving age:

Please visit the Department of Education's *Wellbeing and Learning* website

Do you need an interpreter?

Interpreting services are available on request, including for the hearing impaired. The Telephone Interpreter Service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 131 450. You will not be charged for this service.

For further advice and questions contact your educational services team

T 131 536

Learning and Engagement

Student Engagement & Interagency Partnerships

T 9244 512

www.dec.nsw.gov.au

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NSW Department of Education and Communities



Selective High School Placement Test 2021 for entry to Year 7 in 2022

Test information for parents and students

When will the test be held?

The test will be held on **Thursday 11 March 2021 at 9.00am** at the allocated test centre. Signs will show you which entrance to use.

How long does the test take?

Parents must drop students off at the entrance to the test centre by **9.00am** and return promptly at **1.30pm** to pick them up.

There is a short rest break after the first test, a longer break after the second test when students can eat the food they bring, and a short rest break after the third test.

The finish time may vary according to the size of the test centre and its facilities. There is no supervision for students before 8:30am. If the test finishes early, students will be supervised. Please do not be late to collect your child after the test.

Dropping off and collecting your child

Test day is a regular school day for the test school so it is important to avoid disruption to staff and students at the school.

Do not park in or near the school grounds and observe any instructions from the school about parking restrictions. Signs will direct you to the entrance to use.

As parents will not be allowed on school grounds you will need to take your child to the designated entrance and a supervisor will meet students there. Please give anaphylaxis kits or other approved equipment to that supervisor. Collect your child from the same entrance after the test. The only exception is where a parent has prior written authority to attend for medical reasons.

If you arrange for your child to be collected by someone else or to walk to school or home, you must send a note with your child giving permission and accepting responsibility for your child's safety.

What if something goes wrong?

If something occurs to prevent your child attending the test or doing his or her best in the test, you can submit a request for consideration of illness or misadventure by 18 March 2021. You will need to get a medical certificate and independent evidence of illness covering the day if the problem is medical, or other relevant evidence if it is not about illness or injury.

Go to <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7/the-test/illness-or-misadventure> for more information about submitting an illness/misadventure request.

If your child arrives late there will be no extra time given.

Hygiene precautions

Wearing of masks and using hand sanitiser is permitted if you wish your child to do so. The presiding officer and supervisors will be observing hygiene requirements in place for NSW schools.

Please do not bring your child to the test if he or she is ill with respiratory disease. Presiding officers may not admit a student if they consider others in the test centre to be at risk from contagious disease.

What should students wear to the test?

Students should wear school uniform, including a jumper and a hat for the break.

What to bring to the test

Students must bring a printed copy of their 'Test authority letter' that shows their application number.

Students may bring a wristwatch that does **not** make a noise or calculate, communicate or photograph.

Students SHOULD bring:	Students SHOULD NOT bring:
Glasses, asthma inhaler (and spacer) and tissues if required. Other equipment and medical devices that have been approved before the test	Pens, pencil cases, erasers, rulers, note paper or other material such as dictionaries or books. Pencils and erasers will be supplied.
Clear plastic water bottle – with no writing on it except for the brand name (to be stored under the seat to avoid spills)	Equipment such as calculators, computers, mobile phones, computer watches, watches that calculate or beep, or any device that calculates, photographs or communicates
A substantial snack to eat during the break as lunch will be late, especially if the test is delayed.	Snacks containing nuts or nut products.

For further information go to <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7/the-test>.

Tips for students

The test is designed to show your ability so there is no particular material to study before the test. You'll use your knowledge and skills to answer challenging questions.

Sample tests

You can see the types of questions that may be asked, and the explanation of answers, in the sample tests at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7/the-test>. Practise answering the questions using the sample answer sheet.

On test day

- Go to the toilet before you leave home.
- You will be met at the school entrance by a supervisor who will show you where to go to line up with your school group.
- Pay attention and follow all instructions from the presiding officer and supervisors at all times.
- Put your hand up if you have a problem or a question or if you need to go to the toilet.
- Don't talk to other students once you enter the test room.
- In the test room you will sit at the desk which has a sheet showing your name and other personal details.
- There will be a short rest break after the first and third tests and a longer break after the second test, when you will go outside and eat food you have brought.

The tests

There are four tests. They will be done in this order:

Reading	40 minutes	30 multiple choice questions
Mathematical reasoning	40 minutes	35 multiple choice questions
Thinking skills	40 minutes	40 multiple choice questions
Writing	30 minutes	1 question

During the test

Listen carefully to instructions.

Put your hand up if you have any problems or any questions at any time.

You will be asked to copy your name and application number onto all of your test papers.

Answer sheets

Read each test question carefully before you start answering it. Think about what it asks you to do. Choose the answer that you think is best.

<p>Answer questions on the answer sheet by using the pencil to shade in the circle clearly underneath the option you choose.</p> <p>If you change your mind about the answer, rub it out thoroughly and show your new answer clearly.</p> <p>Keep checking that the number of the question you are working on in the question booklet is the same as the number you are shading on the answer sheet.</p> <p>If you find you are answering a question at the wrong place, put your hand up and tell a supervisor. The supervisor will record the question numbers affected. Start the next question at the correct place and come back to fix the problem later if you have time, changing one question at a time.</p>	<p>1 A B C D E ○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p> <p>2 A B C D E ○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p>
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Print off a sample answer sheet to use for practice at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7/the-test>

Make sure you show your answers on the answer sheet. Answers recorded in the question booklet cannot be marked. Answer in the question booklet only if you have been given permission to do so and if so, you will have separate instructions.

Marks are not taken off for wrong answers. Incorrect, double or blank answers score zero. It is better to have a guess rather than leave an answer blank as this helps you make sure you are answering on the correct line.

If you want to work anything out in the multiple-choice tests you can write on the question booklet or on the back of the sheet with your personal details on it. For the writing test there is a page for planning in the question booklet that you can use if you wish. Any notes that you have made in the question booklet or on the writing planning page or personal details sheet will not be marked.

In the writing test you must write only about the question you are given. The question will ask you to write for a particular purpose and audience. Markers will pay attention to creative ideas, the structure of the writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation as well as effectiveness for the purpose and audience.

Timing

Use your time wisely. Work steadily. If you find a question too difficult, do not spend a long time on it. Shade in the answer you think is best and come back to that question later if you have time.

There will be no time warnings during the test. You will need to check the test centre's official clock to find out how much time you have left. Put your hand up if you cannot see it clearly.

Test conditions

If suspected of cheating you risk having the test marks not counted. Please make sure you:

- do not open the question booklet until the presiding officer tells you to do so
- do not look at the work of others during the test
- do not talk to other students while in the test room
- do not keep writing after you are told to stop.

Good advice

Get a good night's sleep the night before the test and try to keep calm. It's normal to feel nervous about a test. If you can relax, you will have a better chance to think clearly and do your best.



NORTHMEAD CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS HIGH SCHOOL

OPEN DAY TUESDAY 9 MARCH 2021 (Students only)

For students in Year 5 entering Year 7 in 2023 and Year 6 students entering Year 7 2022

Morning Session:

- 9.15AM/10.00AM - Hall presentation for students (only)
- 10.00AM/12.30 PM - Hands on activities for students
- 12.30PM to 1:00PM – lunch (bbq & drink)
- 1.00PM – Parents to pick up students at front gate.
- Parent video presentation access via school website at a later date.

Discover the fabulous opportunities that Northmead CAPA High offers:

Comprehensive Education for all students

- Special Performing Arts Programs
- Broad Curriculum
- Excellent Sporting Opportunities
- Chrome Book Program

Central Location

- Just off Windsor Road - end of Campbell Street
- Good Transport Connections - Bus and Rail
- Experienced and Committed Teachers

Caring School

- Support for Year 7 Students
- Orientation Program, Year 6 to Year 7
- Peer Support
- Student Ambassadors
- Year 7 Camp
- Project Based Learning
- Proactive Learning Support Team
- Anti-bullying Program, with state recognition
- Values driven school that promotes Respect, Responsibility, Commitment, Community
- Special Programs: Social Justice, Student Representative Council & Multicultural Committee
- Full time School Counsellor
- Student Support Officer – Social Worker

Extra Curricula Activities

- Sport
- Debating & Public Speaking
- Mock Trials
- MUNA
- Wakakirri
- Sister Exchange Visits to Kawaguchi Japan
- Meet teachers and students
- Use technology to create a memento of your visit
- Develop team building skills
- Discover the powers of your mind problem solving and brain teasers
- Explore 'living' music using technology
- Experience the fascinating and exciting work of Science
- View nature at work - visit the school farm and animals

Focus on Academic Excellence

- High Potential & Gifted Academic Programs
- Accelerated Courses
- Extension Program for Year 7 Students
- Support and Remediation Programs

Creative and Performing Arts

- Year 7 CAPA Class (selected by audition)
- Elective classes in CAPA (Year 9-12)
- Band, Vocal Ensembles, Company, Music, Drama, Visual Arts & Circus, Dance, Drama, Visual Arts, Music Ensembles, Companies
- Vocal & Instrumental Tutorial Program





Northmead Creative and Performing Arts High School



2021 CAPA AUDITIONS

Applications are now open for students wishing to take part in our 2022 CAPA program in Dance, Drama, Music - Instrumental & Voice and Visual Arts.

Audition Dates: 22nd - 26th March 2021



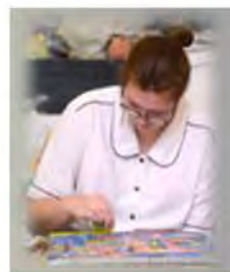
2021 HAST

Registration is now open for the Higher Ability Selection Test (HAST) for students wishing to be part of the Year 7 High Potential and Gifted Education Program for 2022.

Closing Date: 25th March 2021

Open Day

TUESDAY 9th MARCH 2021



Please visit: <https://northmead-h.schools.nsw.gov.au/> for more information and to register your interest in CAPA and HAST.

OPEN DAY and Parent Information will be updated on our website.

Dance at Northmead Creative & Performing Arts High School

Come join our incredibly successful Dance Program here at Northmead Creative and Performing Arts High School.

We offer after school Extra-Curricular Dance Ensembles which include – Dance Company, Contemporary, Jazz, Hip Hop, Ballet and Cheerleading.

See our amazing Extra-Curricular Online Competition results 2020

BRING IT ON FESTIVAL 2020



A huge congratulations to HIP HOP ENSEMBLE who received 1st place in the Bring It On Festival 2020.

For those who missed the live stream of the competition and to watch our schools performance, follow this link - https://fb.watch/1h_tmcRKLP/

2020 AUSTRALIAN ALL STAR CHEERLEADING FEDERATION VIRTUAL NATIONALS

A huge congratulations to CHEERLEADING ENSEMBLE who received 2ND place in the HIGH SCHOOL CHEER - LEVEL 1 Section.



DANCE LIFE UNITE ONLINE STATE & NATIONAL DANCE COMPETITION 2020



A big congratulations to all the students of the Dance Company and Ensembles whose pieces were entered into the Dance Life Unite Online State Dance Competition.

These are our amazing State results:

LYRICAL SECTION

Contemporary Ensemble – Missing You - Choreographed by Maddy Bonner – 1st place

Dance Company – Clown - Choreographed by Miss Elliott – Highly Commended

CONTEMPORARY SECTION

Dance Company – Samurai - Choreographed by Miss Cullen – 3rd place

JAZZ SECTION

Jazz Ensemble – Fashion – Choreographed by Ms Sammes – 4th place

HIP HOP SECTION

Hip Hop Ensemble – Bring it On – Choreographed by students – 1st place

ANY STYLE SECTION

Ballet Ensemble – La Bayadere - Choreographed by Miss Cullen – 1st place

We also qualified for the NATIONAL COMPETITION, up against a huge number of Australian Schools

LYRICAL SECTION

Contemporary Ensemble – Missing You - Choreographed by Maddy Bonner – National 1st place

Dance Company – Clown - Choreographed by Miss Elliott – National Merit

CONTEMPORARY SECTION

Dance Company – Samurai - Choreographed by Miss Cullen – National 2nd place

JAZZ SECTION

Jazz Ensemble – Fashion – Choreographed by Ms Sammes – National 4th place

HIP HOP SECTION

Hip Hop Ensemble – Bring it On – Choreographed by students – National 4th place

ANY STYLE SECTION

Ballet Ensemble – La Bayadere - Choreographed by Miss Cullen – National 2nd place



MACQUARIE
University

Cool Kids Online

INTERNET DELIVERED CHILD AND ADOLESCENT ANXIETY TREATMENT (AGES 7-17 YRS)

Program Tel: 02 9850 6393
E: CKOSchools@mq.edu.au

Approximately 1 in 5 young people experiences significant anxiety and fearfulness that affects their daily life. The NSW Department of Education has engaged the Centre for Emotional Health at Macquarie University to offer free access to online treatments for school students who have significant anxiety disorders.

WHAT IS ANXIETY?

There are a range of different types of anxiety experienced by children and teenagers including finding it difficult to be away from parents, being extremely shy, worrying about what others think of them, avoiding social and school activities, or worrying a lot about everyday matters, potential dangers and the future. Sleep difficulties, headaches, nausea and difficulty breathing can be part of these feelings. Many children experience more than one type of anxiety.



BENEFITS OF COOL KIDS ONLINE

- Families can access Cool Kids Online in the comfort of their own homes
- The interactive online format is easy to navigate and engaging for children and young people
- Families receive professional telephone support throughout the program from qualified, experienced therapists
- Cool Kids Online is based on research and has been shown to be effective in reducing anxiety.

WHAT DO THE ONLINE PROGRAMS INVOLVE?

There are 8 modules that contain text, videos, exercises, and illustrations – to teach the youth (and parent) clear and practical skills to help the young person manage their fears and worries and overcome their anxieties. The modules will cover:

- a. Learning about feelings and anxiety
- b. Fighting fear by facing fear
- c. Detective thinking, and learning to think more realistically
- d. Building assertiveness and dealing with teasing
- e. Helpful ways of coping when upset

Families also receive four, 30 minute-telephone sessions with an experienced therapist during the program. These sessions enable parents or youth to **ask questions** about program content and help them **apply the skills** to their fears and worries.

For children in primary school, the program is mostly delivered to their primary caregiver, who then uses it to help their child. For adolescents in high school, the program is directly delivered to the teenager, with some additional support from their caregiver

WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO?

- Eligible families who are referred by a their school counselling team contact Cool Kids team at **02/ 9850-6393** or **CKOschools@mq.edu.au**
- You will first speak to an intake officer who will ask a few basic questions.
- Next you will be given a link to a website where you will receive a series of detailed questions for both the caregiver and the young person to complete. This is an extremely important assessment that tells us whether the program is suitable for your child.
- If the program is suitable, you will receive a call from your allocated therapist who will provide you with a personal login. Four therapy sessions will also be scheduled.
- You and your child will work through the program with support from your therapist over the next 12 weeks.
- At the end of 12 weeks, you will once again be asked to complete the online assessment so that we can see how much your child has improved.

ABOUT US

The Centre for Emotional Health (CEH) is an internationally recognised specialist research centre at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia. The CEH conducts research to further our understanding of child and adult emotional disorders and to improve methods of assessment and treatment.

The Cool Kids Programs have been developed and evaluated at the CEH over the past 25 years. Cool Kids is a structured, skills-based program that teaches children and their parents how to better manage anxiety. Many scientific studies show that most young people who complete Cool Kids experience significant improvements, with decreases in worry, fear, family distress and life interference.

FIND OUT MORE
Centre for Emotional Health Clinic
Macquarie University NSW 2109 Australia
T: +61 (2) 9850 0693
E: CKOschools@mq.edu.au
W: mq.edu.au/ceh-clinic
CRICOS Provider 00002J



MACQUARIE
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INSIGHTS

Supporting boys in upper primary school



The upper primary school years are the start of big physical changes and boys can struggle more than girls. Even though some of our boys are growing physically, this time can be challenging, unpredictable and full of big emotions and awkwardness.

Some anxiety can also occur as the end of primary school approaches and some boys can fight with their physiology. Parents need to be mindful to recognise that for many pubescent boys, every day at school feels like going into a war zone because it is so unpredictable.

The following ideas will help to guide you through this time.

Have realistic expectations

Create a calm, predictable environment to counteract the stress many boys may experience. Parents can do this by avoiding asking too many questions and placing too much pressure especially around homework. Especially avoid criticism, nagging and lecturing — they won't improve anything.

Keep things light

Boys appreciate lightness and humour, especially when they may be struggling with anxiety or worry. Maybe you could find some funny, goofy cat or dog videos to show them or share some funny experiences that might trigger the beautiful happy neurochemicals in their brain. Be a bit ridiculous – intentionally.

Share developmental changes

Have brief conversations with your son about the coming brain changes, especially pruning, which is a 'trimming down' process in the teenage brain where irrelevant/unused mental connections from childhood are lost. These conversations can help him understand why he may be struggling with organisation and be forgetting things that he used to remember. Once he knows there is a reason, he'll tend to manage it better — indeed many boys are relieved! Help your son to work out ways to remember important stuff.

Make home a welcome base for his friends

Ensure that you make your home a welcome base for his friends, regardless of gender. The hunger to 'hang out together' is still strong even for our digital natives, and they will always turn up to a place where they are welcome and where there is a familiar space to gather. It's really good to give your son's mates the message that 'our door is always open for you'. We never know when a family conflict becomes too painful for a boy or that just having some calm down time is what the whole family may need.

Stoke his spark

Help you son identify his passion whether sport, games or music that will keep him engaged in the years ahead. Disengagement is very common among boys in early to middle secondary school and those who have an interest they love and are capable at, tend to struggle less. In primary school boys should sample many activities so that they can discover their real interests.

Help manage anxiety

Many boys experience anxiety as they move toward adolescence and the end of the primary school years. Some boys display anxiety through silliness, inappropriate behaviour, an increase in aggression (often toward siblings), disrespectful language towards parents, changes in eating patterns and struggles with sleep. If you have ongoing concerns check in with your son's teacher and seek help.

Practise kindness

Even though this sounds counterintuitive if you are experiencing some hot moments with your pre pubescent or pubescent son, kindness especially in small unexpected ways has enormous power. Many boys struggle with low self-worth and when they muck up they struggle even more with feeling acceptable and loved.

Above all, reassure your son often that you love him fiercely and unconditionally, no matter what.

Maggie Dent presents a related webinar: Communicating with teenage boys

Our school has a membership with Parenting Ideas. As part of this membership, you can attend the upcoming webinar 'Communicating with teenage boys' at no cost.

About

In this webinar, Maggie Dent shows how using compassionate, empowering communication with teenage boys can better guide them across the bridge to healthy manhood to a place where they feel worthwhile and engaged in respectful relationships.

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Maggie Dent

Commonly known as the 'queen of common sense', Maggie Dent has become one of Australia's favourite parenting authors and educators, with a particular interest in the early years, adolescence and resilience. She has written seven major books including the bestselling *Mothering Our Boys* and her 2020 release, *From Boys to Men*. Maggie is host of the ABC podcast, [Parental As Anything](#). *She is the mother of four sons and a very grateful grandmother.* For further details visit maggiedent.com