



Student Wellbeing Bulletin

June 2020



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WELCOME...

"The nearer a man comes to a calm mind, the closer he is to strength."

MARCUS AURELIUS (121 AD -180 AD),

Roman Emperor and Philosopher

Life can be very busy.

Often it feels like we have a million thoughts running through our minds.

After the whirlwind of the past few months, it is time for us to take a deep breath and welcome some 'normality' back into our lives.

Take the time over the holidays to engage in the things that make you happy, like being with friends, going for a walk, going out for dinner/coffee, or having a couple of people over to your home; but please make sure you are following the advice of the Chief Health Officer when making any plans, to ensure you and your loved ones are safe.

Being happy and relaxing with loved ones, can bring a calmness to our emotions and our wellbeing.

Sometimes, you just need to stop and find the calm in all the chaos.





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Student Wellbeing Team:

Mr Paul Graham

Manager of Student Wellbeing

Mrs Kerri Haworth

Student Wellbeing Coordinator - Senior Campus

Mrs Danielle Mott

Student Wellbeing Coordinator - Junior Campus

Mrs Mia Walduck

Chaplain

Mrs Margaret Taylor

Inclusion and Individual Needs Coordinator

Maria Disley, Jane Horrabin, Maria Calafiore

Inclusion Aides

Jody Clooney, Caz Coady, Kate Tosin, Deb Colahan

School Nurses



KEY DATES:

JUNE:

8 - Queen's birthday public holiday

9 - All students return to on-campus learning

19 - Correction Day

26 - End of Term 2 (2:30pm finish)

JULY:

13 - Start of Term 3



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Parents or carers wanting to discuss concerns regarding their child's wellbeing, should contact Paul Graham, the Manager of Student Wellbeing.

gpd@mwsc.vic.edu.au

Paul's Perspective...

Some students may not be aware, but in the corridor opposite first aid, we have a Wellness room. This room is available for students who may need some time out and a safe space to self regulate.

We have recently put a laptop in the room for students to use for the purpose of video counselling and telehealth appointments. If you are a student who receives external counselling via video or telehealth, you are welcome to come to Wellbeing and use the laptop in the comfort and privacy of the Wellness room.

Please note Headspace is offering doctors appointments via telehealth on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Phone 9006 6500 to arrange an appointment (free with a Medicare card). If you need to attend a doctor but cannot attend after school, you can make the appointment during school hours and use the Wellness room and laptop for the appointment. If you need any assistance at all, please let us know and we can help you set up an appointment.

YOUTH FRIENDLY DOCTORS

WHAT CAN OUR DOCTORS HELP WITH?

- Our doctors take the time to listen to you. They offer extended appointments for mental health and counselling
- general health checks
- physical health
- sexual health
- women's health
- men's health
- gender diverse health counselling

Appointments via telehealth | phone | in person
Free with a Medicare card
Weds, Thurs & Fri
ph. (03) 9006 6500

headspace
Hawthorn



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If you need any support from the Wellbeing team on the Senior Campus, contact Kerri or Paul

mkd@mwsc.vic.edu.au (Kerri)

gpd@mwsc.vic.edu.au (Paul)

What's happening on the Senior campus?

With the return to on campus learning, the Wellbeing team, along with the Senior Sub School team, are spending Tuesday and Thursday lunchtimes in the Fishbowl to support any Year 12 students who may be feeling anxious or overwhelmed at the moment.

Naturally, the Wellbeing team is always available for support for all students throughout the day, but we are just making this extra time available for our Year 12 students during what has been a very difficult and stressful return to school.

We look forward to a calmer Semester 2.



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If you need any support from the Wellbeing team on the Junior Campus, contact **Ms Mott** or **Paul**

mot@mwsc.vic.edu.au (Ms Mott)

gpd@mwsc.vic.edu.au (Paul)

What's happening on the Junior Campus?

Yr 7 and 8 have only been back on campus for 2 weeks and the focus for all has been on Reconnecting, Recognising and Reflecting. The first week back from remote learning was an important week to reconnect with friends and teachers. Homegroup focused on activities that encouraged the students to talk to each other face to face, laugh with each other and to feel motivated again. Our Chaplain and nurse put together this clip for the students:

[TOP TIPS - MOTIVATION.MOV](#)

Week 10 looked at recognising your own skills, strengths, recognizing others and their kindness. The Wellbeing focus was on anxiety and Paul and Kerri talked about anxiety, what it looks like, supports that you can put in place and what the Wellbeing team can offer students.

[How to Help Anxiety.mp4](#)

Week 11 is our week of reflection. We are looking at hope, creating silver linings, goal setting and managing stress.

[Top Tips to Help with Stress.mp4](#)

The students have returned in such a positive way and with such enthusiasm. They have demonstrated so well each of these key themes and have done themselves and the school proud.



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Junior Campus:

jsnurse@mwsc.vic.edu.au

Senior Campus:

mssnurse@mwsc.vic.edu.au

From Your Caring Nurses...

What is happening to our body when we don't feel calm?

Blame the amygdala hijack! The amygdala is a collection of cells near the base of your brain. There are two, one in each side of the brain. The amygdala is considered to be part of the brain's limbic system. It's key to how you process strong emotions like fear and pleasure – it engages when you laugh really hard or are really excited and happy as well as when you're stressed, when it activates the 'fight or flight' response.

You also have the frontal lobes, which are the two large areas at the front of your brain. They're part of the cerebral cortex, which is a newer, rational, and more advanced brain system. This is where thinking, reasoning, decision making, and planning happen. The frontal lobes allow you to process and think about your emotions. You can then manage these emotions and determine a logical response. Unlike the automatic response of the amygdala, the response to fear from your frontal lobes is consciously controlled by you.

Early humans were exposed to the constant threat of being killed or injured by wild animals or other tribes. To improve the chances of survival, the 'fight-or-flight' response evolved. It's an automatic response to physical danger that allows you to react quickly without thinking. When you feel threatened and afraid, the amygdala automatically activates the fight-or-flight response by sending out signals to release stress hormones – cortisol and adrenaline- that prepare your body to fight or run away. This response is triggered by emotions like fear, anxiety, aggression, and anger.

Unfortunately, your brain still releases these same hormones even when the threat isn't putting us in danger and we can feel just the same – really stressed! These hormones can make you feel tense, you might breathe a little fast, your heart starts to race, and you might feel really worried about the situation you're in or what might come next.

When the threat is mild or moderate, the frontal lobes override the amygdala, and you respond in the most rational, appropriate way. However, when the threat is strong, the amygdala acts quickly. It may overpower the frontal lobes, automatically triggering the fight-or-flight response. However, at the same time, your frontal lobes are processing the information to determine if danger really is present and the most logical response to it.

The good news is that you can learn to calm yourself and remain calm by re-engaging your frontal lobes to override the amygdala hijack.



Remaining calm under pressure is not an inborn trait, but a skill that *anybody* can learn.

Here's how:

Slow your breathing, slow down, focus your thoughts

Consciously breathe more slowly and deeply. Count from 1 to 10 as you inhale, then count from 1 to 10 as you exhale. Breathe slowly and evenly. Think about the speed and rhythm of your breaths, and focus on what's going on in your body as you inhale and exhale. These deep breaths bring more oxygen into your lungs and then into your bloodstream, which is the exact opposite effect of the fight or flight reaction. You're telling your body and brain that it's no longer necessary to increase the intensity of your fight-or-flight reaction.

Think about the emotions you might be feeling and see if you can re-label them from negative emotions to positive ones, for example:

Fear ð Anticipation

Frustration ð Desire

Worry ð Concern

Dread ð Caution

Flustered ð Excited

Alarmed ð Curious

When you re-label your emotions, you are using controllable parts of your brain to convince your amygdalae that this is not a fight-or-flight situation but instead a "stay aware and watchful" situation, or even a "sit back and enjoy" situation.

As you continue to breathe slowly and deeply while holding the re-labelled emotions in your mind, notice the speed at which your heart is beating. You will find that it gradually returns to a normal pace.

You've regained calmness.

You will find that this technique takes a little practice, but it's well worth the effort. You can now think about what the problem is really about and whether you can solve it.



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If you need any support from the Chaplain, contact Mia

wmi@mwsc.vic.edu.au

CHALLENGE

Chaplain's Challenge

It has been a big term, but you're almost there!

It has been a challenge, but you can make it through!

The school holidays are just around the corner and will be a great time to wind down and relax...

To be calm...

Do the things you enjoy...

Spend time with your family or friends...

Play with a pet...

Watch your favourite movie...

BUT I have a **challenge** for you to do!

If you figure out the riddle below, I'd love for you to email me with your answer!

Go on... Give it a go... Riddle me this...

You have me today,

Tomorrow you'll have more;

As your time passes,

I'm not easy to store;

I don't take up space,

But I'm only in one place;

I am what you saw,

But not what you see.

What am I?