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Issue 6/2009

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Principal's Report

Dear Parents, Staff and Students

During the last few weeks of term I met with each new staff member who has joined St Stephen's School this year.

What an eye-opener for me and what a delightful privilege! The enthusiasm and absolute pleasure each person expressed to me about their love for their job, for their students and for our School was a tonic. Several told me some sad circumstances they have experienced, and yet their love of life and positive confidence demonstrated to me their strong resilience and faith in God. Our community is blessed to have each of them on our staff. I certainly was blessed in my conversations.

As we begin a new term, I ask each of you who are parents to be supportive, loving and yet firm in your role as a parent. It is a demanding role and there are many pressures on you. Work with the School, and be consistent in your expectations of your child and in your own discipline of them. (Being a grandparent, I feel 'experienced' in the art of parenthood and perhaps old enough to offer some advice!) It is a difficult road but also a rewarding and enjoyable one. Our children need us to be there and to listen – a fact certainly reinforced in the recent program on Bullying and Cyber Bullying on Four Corners on 6 April.

I have included an article from the April *Parenting Tips* which you may find useful. It contains pointers on the challenge parents face of 'getting in first', and how important it is to have decisively formative conversations with children before someone or some television program sows a skewed message.

To our students I want to say well done to you if you were pleased with your efforts and achievements during Term 1. Continue to work hard in Term 2 which is going to be a very busy term. There are many rich experiences you can be involved in if you so choose.

If you were not proud of your standards, I challenge you to make a fresh start and take up the baton of hard work and discipline. There is no space for slackness and there is no space for disruptive behaviour that interferes with the learning of others.

Have a challenging and wonderful Term 2.

It is not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves. - Sir Edmund Hillary

Mrs Caryl Roberts, Principal

PARENTING TIPS

No. 76 April 2009

Ten Tips for Talking to Your Kids About Anything

Raising a child is probably the most gratifying job any of us will ever have -- and one of the toughest. In large part, that's because times have changed. We live in an increasingly complex world that challenges us everyday with a wide range of disturbing issues that are difficult for children to understand and for adults to explain. We believe this booklet can help. It offers practical, concrete tips and techniques for talking easily and openly with young children ages 8 to 12 about some very tough issues: sex, HIV/AIDS, violence, drugs and alcohol. Some parents and caregivers may question the appropriateness of talking about such sensitive topics with young children. Maybe you're one of them. But consider this: our kids are already hearing about these issues from TV, movies, magazines and school friends. If we don't talk with them early and often -- and answer their questions -- they'll get their facts from someone else. And we'll have missed an important opportunity to offer our children information that's not only accurate, but also in sync with our own personal values and moral principles. Make sense? We think so. So let's get started.

1. Start early.

Kids are hearing about and forced to cope with tough issues at increasingly early ages, often before they are ready to understand all aspects of these complicated ideas. Additionally, medical research and public health data tells us that when young children want information, advice and guidance, they turn to their parents first. Once they reach the teenage years, they tend to depend more on friends, the media and other outsiders for their information. As a parent, you have a wonderful opportunity to talk with your child about these issues first, before anyone else can confuse your child with incorrect information or explanations that lack the sense of values you want to instill. We need to take advantage of this "window of opportunity" with young children and talk with them earlier and more often.

2. Initiate conversations with your child.

While we want our children to feel comfortable enough to come to us with any questions and concerns -- and thus give us the opportunity to begin conversations -- this doesn't always occur. That's why it's perfectly okay -- at times even necessary -- to begin the discussions ourselves. TV and other media are great tools for this. Say, for instance, that you and your 12-year-old are watching TV together and the program's plot includes a teenage pregnancy. After the show is over, ask your child what she thought of the program. Did she agree with how the teenagers behaved? Just one or two questions could help start a valuable discussion that comes from everyday circumstances and events. Also, when speaking with your child, be sure to use words she can understand. Trying to explain AIDS to a 6-year-old with words like "transmission" and "transfusion" may not be as helpful as using simpler language. The best technique: use simple, short words and straightforward explanations.

3. ...Even about sex and relationships.

If you feel uncomfortable talking about such sensitive subjects -- particularly sex and relationships -- with your young child, you're not alone. Many parents feel awkward and uneasy, especially if they are anxious about the subject. But, for your kid's sake, try to overcome your nervousness and bring up the issue with your child.

4. Create an open environment.

Young children want their parents to discuss difficult subjects with them. However, our kids will look to us for answers only if they feel we will be open to their questions. It's up to us to create the kind of atmosphere in which our children can ask any questions -- on any subject -- freely and without fear of



Dubious TV content prompted worthwhile discussion between Bi and her daughter

PARENTING TIPS

consequence. How do you create such an atmosphere? By being encouraging, supportive and positive. For example, if your child asks, "How many people have AIDS?" try not to answer with, "I don't know. Please just finish your lunch." No matter how busy you are respond with something like, "That's an interesting question, but I'm not sure. Let's go look it up." (FYI: Don't worry that if your children learn that you don't know everything, they won't look up to you. That's simply not true. Kids accept, "I don't know," and "let's go find out," and they are better responses than any inaccurate or misleading answers you may be tempted to offer.) One more point: You don't need to answer all of your children's questions immediately. If your 10-year-old asks, "Mom, what's a condom?" while you're negotiating a tricky tum in rush-hour traffic, it's perfectly okay for you to say something like, "That's an important question. But with all this traffic, I can't explain right now. Let's talk later, after dinner." And make sure you do.

5. Communicate your values.

As a parent, you have a wonderful opportunity to be the first person to talk with your child about tough issues like drugs and violence before anyone else can confuse him with "just-the-facts" explanations that lack the sense of values and moral principles you want to instill. Likewise, when talking with your child about sex, remember to talk about more than "the birds and the bees," and communicate your values. Remember: research shows that children want and need moral guidance from their moms and dads, so don't hesitate to make your beliefs clear.

6. Listen to your child.

How many times do we listen to our children while folding clothes, preparing for the next day's meeting, or pushing a shopping cart through the supermarket? While that's understandable, it's important to find time to give kids our undivided attention. Listening carefully to our children builds self-esteem by letting our youngsters know that they're important to us and can lead to valuable discussions about a wide variety of sensitive issues. Listening carefully also helps us better understand what our children really want to know as well as what they already understand. And it keeps us from talking above our youngsters' heads and confusing them even further. For example, suppose your child asks you what crack is. Before you answer, ask him what he thinks it is. If he says, "I think it's something you eat that makes you act funny," then you have a sense of his level of understanding and can adjust your explanations to fit.

7. Try to be honest.

Whatever your children's age, they deserve honest answers and explanations. It's what strengthens our children's ability to trust. Also, when we don't provide a straightforward answer, kids make up their own fantasy explanations, which can be more frightening than any real, honest response we can offer. While we may not want or need to share all the details of a particular situation or issue with our child, try not to leave any big gaps either. When we do, children tend to fill in the blanks themselves, which can generate a good deal of confusion and concern.

8. Be patient.

Often it can feel like forever before a youngster gets his story out. As adults, we're tempted to finish the child's sentence for him, filling in words and phrases in an effort to hear the point sooner. Try to resist this impulse. By listening patiently, we allow our children to think at their own pace and we are letting them know that they are worthy of our time.

9. Use everyday opportunities to talk.

It's important to try to talk with your kids about tough issues often, but there isn't always time in the day to sit down for a long talk. Also, kids tend to resist formal discussions about today's toughest issues, often categorizing them as just another lecture from mom and dad. But if we use "talk opportunities," moments that arise in everyday life, as occasions for discussion, our children will be a lot less likely to tune us out. For instance, a newspaper item about a child expelled from school for carrying a gun to class can help you start a discussion on guns and violence.

10. Talk about it again. And again.

Since most young children can only take in small bits of information at any one time, they won't learn all they need to know about a particular topic from a single discussion. That's why it's important to let a little time pass, then ask the child to tell you what she remembers about your conversation. This will help you correct any misconceptions and fill in missing facts. Finally, in an effort to absorb all they want to know, children often ask questions again and again over time -- which can test any parent's nerves. But such repetition is perfectly normal, so be prepared and tolerant. Don't be afraid to initiate discussions repeatedly, either. Patience and persistence will serve you and your child well.

Source: Edited text from

www.healthresources.caremark.com

The PARENTING TIPS PAGE is provided as a service to the
Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia
To receive Parenting Tips by email: parentingtips@paic.edu.au

Year 7 Parents

Due to safety reasons and to support the School traffic plan, PLEASE DO NOT ENTER THE STAFF CAR PARK AREAS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY. Some parents are still driving into these areas, especially in the upper staff car park located adjacent the Year 7 Transition Building. Your support on this matter is required.

Swine Influenza

Information received from the Department of Health Communicable Disease Control Directorate:

“School principals and staff are advised that there is no need to exclude children who have recently returned from countries from where human cases of swine influenza have been reported.

Children with symptoms indicative of influenza and other respiratory infections, eg fever, cough, muscle and joint aches/pains, runny nose and sore throat, should be advised to stay home, as usual, until they have recovered.

Please note that this is a rapidly evolving situation and information to schools will be updated as appropriate. Your assistance is greatly.”

Further information is available from www.publichealth.wa.gov.au

Combined School and Church Service

On Sunday 24 May the Primary School and Duncraig Uniting Church congregation will hold a combined service. This will begin at 9:00am and is a wonderful opportunity for the School and the Church to worship together. A Primary School choir will be providing some of the music and other students will also be taking part in the service. We extend a warm invitation to all families and friends of the Primary School and hope to see you there. The service should conclude by 10:00am.

Winter Uniform

Due to the Uniform Shop being moved to the Lorraine Paul Building students will not be required to wear winter uniform until Week 4 (18 May) and **not** Week 3 as is stated in the Work Record.

Guest Speaker – P & F Meeting, Tuesday 19 May 2009

Please join us at the next P&F evening, Tues 19 May, at 7:30pm.

Our guest speaker will be Rev Sonny Rajamoney. Sonny has a passion for Youth ministry, and he will talk about his involvement with St Stephens School and about “engaging with Youth”. We look forward to your company.

Duty Of Care

Parents are reminded that staff members are not on duty until after 8:10am. Students who arrive before this time are not supervised. There is also no staff supervision provided after school. Students are therefore not allowed to play on any playground equipment. Students must keep to footpaths and use the walk crossings on the driveway. Please teach your child to be road wise if waiting to be collected by car or walking home.

Peanut and Nut Allergies

A number of students attending St Stephen’s are severely allergic to peanuts and/or other nuts (eg cashews, pine nuts, hazelnuts). Exposure (consumption, smelling and/or touching any residue left on balls, rails, etc.) can lead to anaphylaxis, a life threatening allergic reaction.

Therefore, while the school appreciates that for some children finding an alternative spread to peanut paste or nut spreads is difficult, **please do not allow your child to bring food containing peanuts, peanut paste or nut spreads to school.** (Please note we do not expect you to ban all foods that state “may contain traces of peanuts”.) Due to the number of students with severe tree nut allergies we also **discourage** their consumption at School.

There will be no punitive action taken should your child be found to have these foods but they will be asked to wash their hands and have a drink following their meal. It will be explained to them why the request is being made and why we discourage the consumption of nuts and nut pastes at our school.

As a community we aim to make the school as safe as is feasibly possible for all our students. If you have any questions, please feel free to direct them to the school nurse. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in this matter. A copy of the school’s *Guidelines on Managing Students with Anaphylaxis at St Stephen’s School* can be obtained on request or from the School Handbook.

Window Washing Tomorrow - Saturday 2 May 2009 - 8:00am - 12:00noon

What a healthy way to take care of some Family Commitment Scheme hours by joining us to make windows shine again! All materials are supplied and there will be a sausage sizzle at the end of the morning. The healthy bit is the great exercise and fresh air; the sausage sizzle is to express our thanks and to restore some of your energy! Come along for an hour or for as long as you like, and don't forget to bring willing and able children with you to build up those hours. This is a great bonding opportunity.

Meet at the admin turning circle where our willing helpers will supply you with equipment and instructions. Call by at any time between 8:00am and noon. Don't forget your hat as it looks like it will be a beautiful day to be outdoors making St Stephen's sparkle!

Primary

Swimming

The Primary School swimming season concluded at Challenge Stadium on Tuesday 7 April. A squad of 40 swimmers competed in the NIPSSA Championships. For the Year 4s, it was the first time they competed in an inter school carnival and they performed well. There were some fantastic individual performances, particularly from Year 7 who won most of their races throughout the day. Overall St Stephen's was placed second, which is a fantastic achievement in this strong competition.

The ELC Swim Carnival will be held on Wednesday 13 May at Beatty Park.

Congratulations - Year 6s

In Term 1 37 teams from around Australia competed in MAWA's 'Have Sum Fun Online' competition in. The team comprising Joshua Pethick, Monique Geddes, Tom Forgie and Catherine Bock was placed second.

In Term 1 20 teams from around Australia competed in STAWA's 'ScienceIQ' on-line science competition. The team comprising of Joshua Pethick, Joshua Page, Connor Firkins and Bryan Strahan was placed first. The team comprising Monique Geddes, Catherine Bock, Chanelle Arnott and Calum Hamilton was placed second.

Primary Disco - Friday 15 May 2009-Parent Helpers Needed

This is an event the children really look forward to. To ensure its success we need several parent helpers on the night. This is great way to gain some family commitment hours and you might even be invited to dance with your little one...(just one dance!). Help is needed to supervise the disco and to take care of drinks and chips. Two helpers will be needed to help clean up at the end of the disco. Please contact Dianne McLaurin on 9309 4275 (after hours) to volunteer some of your time.

Secondary

Congratulations

Aiden Chipps, Year 9 was selected for the Age Nationals Diving Competition in Melbourne during the holidays. He competed against divers from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. His placings were:

4th place on the 1m board (by 6 points from 3rd)

4th place on the 3m board (by 2 points from 3rd)

3rd place on the platform (by 1 point from 2nd)

Career Information

Students are reminded to pay particular attention to the Daily Bulletin as many events are advertised this way.

All Year 10 students are reminded about the excursion to the Career Expo on Friday 15 May. Students will need to be at the turning circle at 12:45 ready for a 1:00pm departure dressed in **full winter uniform**. If students have sport that day they will need to change out of their sport gear and into Winter uniform. A letter will go home this week with more details.

The Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Visual Arts at UWA have an open Day on Monday May 18 at 4:00pm to 7:00pm. This is an opportunity to have guided tours, listen to talks about careers in this area and talk to a prospective student officer.

Murdoch University has their 'Be an Animal Scientist for a day' on Tuesday 7 July. This is open to students in Year 10,11 and 12. Registration forms available from Mrs Darby.

Reminder to students in Year 12 who are interested in sitting the UMAT test for Medicine and Dentistry entry as well as several Health Science courses interstate that registrations close on Friday 5 June. Further information is available at <http://umat.acer.edu.au> or from Mrs Darby. UWA are having an information evening for prospective Medicine students and their parents on Wednesday 13 May at 7:00pm in the Octagon Theatre. This is a very valuable information session for students and teachers. Students interested in Dentistry would benefit from attending the information session for parents and students on Tuesday 26 May in the F J Clarke Theatre in the P block of the QE11 Medical Centre. There are also Science Course and Careers evenings on 2 and 3 June. All details for these events can be found on the UWA website in the events section for future students.

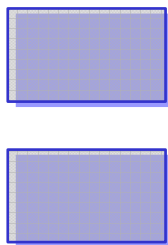
UWA Business School are having their Open Day on Sunday 3 May from 12 noon to 4:00pm. More details are available at www.business.uwa.edu.au/open-day

If you are thinking of studying through the Australian Defence Force Academy, they are having an information evening on Thursday May 7 at Defence Force Recruiting, Level 7, 66 St Georges Tce Perth at 6pm. RSVP to Katrina de Haas on 94887188

Notre Dame University have a course information evening on Monday 25 May with an expo at 5:30pm and presentations from each school at 6:30pm. More details from their website or Mrs Darby

UWA Science Information evenings this year will be held on 2 and 3 June. These evenings run from 6:00pm till 8:15pm and are a great opportunity to speak individually to someone from the department you are interested in. More information available at www.science.uwa.edu.au

Help Needed



Are you home during the school day? Do you want to do something valuable in your parent hours?

You can help our students build their skills and enjoyment of reading. It's easy! Volunteer to read with one or more students during their silent reading periods. Call Sasha Frost on 9243 2443 to organise a suitable time.

2009 National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

All students in Years 3, 5, 7, & 9 across the country will participate in NAPLAN assessment in week 3 of Term 2 (12-14 May with Friday 15 May being a catch up day).

A brochure 2009 National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy - Information for parents has previously been sent home for your information.

Lou Morrison Kimberley Experience 2009

Thank you to all of the students who expressed an interest in this year's trip. The selection process was rigorous and thorough and resulted in 32 students being placed on the Travellers List. A reserve List was also created in the event that one or more students withdraw from the trip.

If your child is on the Reserve List, the \$250 deposit has been applied to his/her school fees.

For those on the Travellers List, an evening meeting will be organised early in Term 2 in order to distribute various required documents. Our departure date has been moved forward one day to **Thursday 18 June** in order to facilitate a visit to an iron ore mine in the Pilbara. The group will still return to Perth on Friday 3 July.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Revd Wilson at 9243 2160 or wilsonh@ststephens.wa.edu.au

Canteen News

Healthy Heart Month Promotion May 2009

Give your Heart a Healthy kickstart this month by maintaining the essential exercise and nutrition your heart requires. Please visit the Heart Foundation display in our school foyer to pick up healthy tips for your family.

Our canteen will be promoting Healthy Heart Month during May with Nutritional Promotions and displays. Students will have opportunities to sample Healthy Heart Food and learn about how to keep a healthy lifestyle.

Date	8:30 -11:30	11:00 - 2:00
Monday 4 May	L Kerspian A Peacock	Yen
Tuesday 5 May	K Cox J Power	B Blythe V Swainston
Wednesday 6 May	J Corey	R Poultney (11:30)
Thursday 7 May	HELP NEEDED	F Kestel Cheryl & Keron
Friday 8 May	J Fraser L Guard	M Skinner C Ash
Monday 11 May	T Bowie M Mosenthal K Brower (10-1)	D Reinhardt
Tuesday 12 May	N Filocmo	L Dalton
Wednesday 13 May	K Batty M Von-Eyk	HELP NEEDED
Thursday 14 May	L Bissel L Beament T Vlahos	S Anderson Help Needed
Friday 15 May	L Luck N Naglan J Hardie	K Bush HELP NEEDED

Community News

Academic task Force education consultants TEE help. Saturday classes for Year 11 and 12 students. Subjects include Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, English, Literature, Human Biology and Economics. They are small group classes with very experienced teachers.

Year 8, 9 and 10 Saturday Classes are also available, in English and Mathematics.

For more information please contact Dr Pam Bagworth or Dr Robert Hallam on 9317 4421.

Inspiring Healthy Families

- 1) Have you ever wanted your child to be more energetic and inspired?
- 2) Have you ever wanted your child to gain the benefits of harmony between diet, exercise and academic performance?
- 3) Would you like to be a hero to your child? Due to the generosity of the Federal Government, we at LiveFit are able to offer you and your child the opportunity to fulfill these three wishes. FREE!! Join our Term 2 course by visiting www.livefitwa.com.au or by emailing jenny@livefitwa.com.au

WOW Dinner Keep this date free. 6 May 2009 @ the Glengarry Tavern Duncraig 7:00 pm start. It has been a long time in the planning but we have finally got WOW up and running and I'm sure you will agree the topic is one that affects many in our community; EATING DISORDERS. Cath Ashton from Women's Health Works Joondalup is our guest speaker and is sure to educate you in many aspects of this disorder. Please come and join us and bring a friend.

Student Exchange Australia, a not for profit organisation is pleased to present a free information evening in Perth on Wednesday 6 May, 7:30pm Medina Grand Perth, 33 Mounts Bay Road, Perth.

The evening gives the students and families the opportunity to learn more about becoming an exchange student and the various scholarship options that are available.