



From the Principal

Mr John Freeman



July 23 marks the Bicentenary of the Fourviere Pledge.

On July 23, 1816, twelve seminarians, including Marcellin Champagnat, climbed the steep steps to the top of the hill of Fourvière, Lyon, and there, in the small chapel dedicated to Our Lady, they promised to work at beginning a new religious order in the Church: a group called "Mary-ists", whose work in the church would resemble that of the Jesuits, but whose style would be unlike anything that existed in the Church at that time. Marists regard this event as a foundational moment in the birth of the Society of Mary.

One year later Marcellin put this vision into action in La Valla in France when he gathered a few young men together to commence the Marist Brothers. Marcellin's desire to make Jesus known and loved through the example of Mary continues today including the Latrobe Valley, and many parts of the world.

Fourviere Pledge

All for the greater glory of God and the greater honour of Mary, Mother of the Lord Jesus.

We the undersigned, striving to work together for the greater glory of God and the honour of Mary, Mother of the Lord Jesus, assert and declare our sincere intention and firm will of consecrating ourselves at the first opportunity to founding the pious congregation of Mary-ists. That is why by the present act and our signatures, in so far as we can, we irrevocably dedicate ourselves and all our goods to the Society of the blessed Virgin. We do this not childishly or lightly or for some human motive or the hope of material benefit, but seriously, maturely, having taken advice, having weighed everything before God, solely for the greater Glory of God and the honour of Mary, Mother of the Lord Jesus.

We pledge ourselves to accept all sufferings, trials, inconveniences, and if needs be, torture, because we can do all things in Christ Jesus who strengthens us and to whom we hereby promise fidelity in the bosom of our holy mother the Roman Catholic Church, cleaving with all our strength to its supreme head the Roman Pontiff and to our most reverend bishop, the ordinary, that we may be good ministers of Jesus Christ, nourished by the words of faith and by the wholesome teaching which by his grace we have received.

We trust that under the reign of our most Christian kind, the friend of peace and religion, this institute will shortly come to light and we solemnly promise that we shall spend ourselves and all we have in saving souls in every way under the very august name of the Virgin Mary and with her help. And may the holy and immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary be praised.

Amen.



As you would be aware we held our Mid-Year Awards recognising Academic Excellence, Diligence and Merit and significant achievements in sport, cultural and community activities yesterday. During the assembly I spoke to all students and emphasised the importance of setting clear goals to help keep focus. During the assembly we recognised 340 plus young people for their effort, dedication and achievements. Well done.

My thanks to all staff involved in the awards and in particular: Annemarie Clarke for her overall management and organisation; Kellyann Armstrong and Maree Garratt for all their work collating material, sending letters of invitation, creation and printing of certificates as well as the production of the PowerPoint Presentation; Jenny Sutton and Jade Whitehead for logistics; Claire Couling and Brett Van Berkel for collation of award recipients; Kelly Murray and Tamsin McCormack for their organisation and work with student leaders and leading the presentation on the day; and our ISC and maintenance teams for the set-up of the audio-visual system and stadium. Also at the event we heard from our Senior Wind Ensemble, led by Shane Lebbe. The National Anthem was sung by Leo Ma and accompanied by the Senior Wind Ensemble. All performances were excellent and highlights the great work of our Music program.

Today is the last day for Olivia Barrett who has been with us for almost fifteen years. Olivia leaves us to take up a teaching position at St. Catherine's Primary School in Berwick South. Olivia is an outstanding teacher and has held a number of leadership positions during her time at Lavalla Catholic College, including Year 9 Learning Leader for the last few years. We wish Olivia and her family well for the future. Due to Olivia's departure we have now appointed Kristiaan Vallak as a Year 9 Learning Leader and he will be replaced by Vanessa Scalia as a Year 8 Learning Leader. My thanks to both of them for taking on these roles and we wish the best of success.

Farewell also to Jorja Wiltshire, receptionist at Kildare Campus.

I also want to thank Adam Ozga for his work replacing Michael Archipow for several weeks whilst Michael was recovering from surgery.

I would like to welcome the following new staff: Gemma Michaels who is here for most of this term replacing Sue Birt who is on Long Service Leave; and Emma Winton who is replacing Olivia Barratt for the remainder of the year.

Congratulations to Shirley Guthrie and Mark Judd who have recently announced their engagement.

We also congratulate Michael and Joelene McKenna on the birth of their daughter Elise Margaret last week.

Well done to Emma Grunwald and Justin Hough have been accepted as Monash Scholars.

Recently we received a letter from the Latrobe Regional Hospital thanking us for a donation of close to \$4,400 and they advised the funds will be directed to the Gippsland Cancer Care Centre and will be used to purchase new wheelchairs for cancer patients. The money for the donation was achieved from the efforts of our "Cause Worth Week" efforts last term. Thanks to all our student leaders for their efforts and to Annemarie Clarke for her leadership.



Thank you to all families who have agreed to complete Insight SRC Surveys. If you are completing them can I request that they are returned by July 29. My thanks to Doug Doherty for his co-ordination of this process.

As I wrote back in May in this Newsletter, the matter of Child Protection is very much an ongoing matter of focus for all schools. All our students have the right to feel safe and to be safe, all the time. However, safety does not just happen. Lavalla Catholic College commits itself to protect children from physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and cultural abuse, and neglect. Particular attention is paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

The safety of every student, and all other members of our community, is our first priority. We strive to protect children as comprehensively and effectively as possible, by actively and consistently developing and reviewing all policies, processes and practices, informed by experts in this area which is based on research and evidence.

Consequently, we continually strive to foster a culture that emphasises the need for every child to feel and be safe and enables everyone – staff, volunteers, parents, carers and children – to feel confident, enabled and supported to safely disclose child safety concerns. All children, their families and carers are welcome in our school, and communication is fundamental to continuously improving a culture that ensures everyone's safety.

We have published on our website under the policies section all relevant policies on this matter and I encourage you to familiarise yourselves with them. The College, as is every school in Victoria, is working hard to implement requirements of the Child Safe Standards as set out in Ministerial Order 870. All staff have begun training on meeting the standards and more resources are becoming available for schools to help children and families become familiar and confident of the requirements.

If you have any comments about how we can enhance the safety of your children, please contact us.

I invite you to save the date of 9 September 2016, 11.00am as Bishop O'Regan will be celebrating Mass which will be the culmination of us recognising 60 Years of Marist education in partnership with the Brigidine and Presentation Sisters. We have invited a number of past Principals and members of the various Religious Congregations that served over the 60 years to attend the Mass. This event will not be an over-elaborate event, but a very fitting one with Mass, followed by light refreshments for those who let us know they wish to avail themselves of some hospitality. Specific details will be sent to families separately soon.

Finally, I commend to your prayers Donald (Don) Crawford, the father of Adrian Crawford, Chair of the Advisory Council and grandfather of Jack Crawford (Year 8), who passed away last week.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.



Welcome back to term three. Although this can be the most challenging term with regard to weather it is often a very productive term. Most camps and large sporting activities have been completed and we will be able to have a strong focus on classroom activities.



The future depends entirely on what
each of us does every day; a
movement is only people moving.

~Gloria Steinem

Learning Block 3 Interviews

My thanks to all the families who attended the Parent, Student Teacher interviews at the end of last term. While the learning block interviews/reports seem to come around quite quickly they are a great mechanism for keeping on top of student progress and making adjustments or improvements in a timely fashion.

Awards Assembly

To begin this semester we will be celebrating and acknowledging the successes of last semester through our awards assembly on Thursday 21st. These awards offer motivation to students as they focus on their progress for the rest of the year.

Intermediate Band Camp

In the latter part of week one the intermediate Band students headed to Rawson for their annual band camp. Those musicians must be a hardy group, given the weather, Rawson proved a rather cold spot. We look forward to future performances and Eisteddfod endeavours of these young musicians.

Enrolment Interviews

Families wishing to enrol students into Year 7 in 2017 have been invited to attend interviews on 25th, 26th, 27th of July. The interviews are held in the Information Services Centre. For further information please contact the registrar Mrs Allison Langmaid.

Subject Selection for 2017

During this term there is an emphasis on subject selection and career planning particularly for current Year 9 students. It is vital that students and parents are fully informed of all their options and seek the advice offered by staff. In particular, we recommend that parents and year 9 students attend the careers and course counselling Expo held at Kildare on Thursday August 4th. Please be aware that Years 7 and 8 students will have classes, at the St Paul's Campus, as usual on this day.



Mrs Olivia Barrett

This week we farewell Mrs Olivia Barrett who is moving from the area and leaving the College after nearly 14 years of service. We are grateful to Mrs Barrett for her contributions over the years as a classroom teacher particularly of LOTE, RE and PE, as well as for her work as a year level learning leader. We wish Olivia and her family all the best as they settle into their new home.

Ms Emma Winton

This week we welcomed Ms Emma Winton to the teaching staff. In our attempts to replace Olivia Barrett, we were unsuccessful in finding a suitable LOTE teacher and have had to make changes to various teachers' loads. Emma will be taking various Humanities and R.E classes. We apologise to students and teachers who have been affected by these changes but are delighted that we are able to proceed through semester 2 with all classes staffed.

Pick Ups

Please be mindful of the safety of all when you are dropping off or collecting your child. Particularly in bad weather it is important to drive slowly, park legally and consider that pedestrians may have their heads down.

Attendance

On the St Paul's Campus we are continuing to monitor attendance and some families will have received letters asking for written acknowledgement of their child's absences. Please continue with phone calls on the day to alert us to your child's absence, however, it is also essential that we receive written communication as well. An email is often the easiest means to communicate, otherwise a note when your child returns to school would be appreciated. Thank you to all of those families who have been returning signed letters or sending notes in a timely fashion.

If you are planning an extended absence, please contact the school well before the date. An interrupted studies form can be collected from reception.

For any planned absence, it is essential that your child communicates effectively with their teachers to inform them of their absence and determine if assessment tasks need to be adjusted or deleted or due dates amended.

I have been working towards better monitoring of student attendance rates this year so if you have any concerns about your own child or would like information on your child's attendance percentage, please feel free to contact me via email or through reception on the St Paul's Campus.

Finally, we know that the teenage years can be a time of resistance and disengagement and this can sometimes include school. Attached to this week's newsletter is a fact sheet from the Department of Education & Training which includes strategies on what to look out for and how to manage disengagement when this becomes a problem.

Ms Kelly Murray
Welfare & Wellbeing Leader
St Paul's Campus



"You cannot travel the path until you become the path."
Gautama Siddharta, the founder of Buddhism, 563-483 B.C.

Expo

As we approach our Careers and Subject Selection EXPO day, the process to assist our students to focus on pathways to career success has already begun in earnest and will continue for a number of weeks after the event.

I would like to invite all families and members of our community to attend the EXPO event on Thursday 4th August at the Kildare Campus from 11am to 4pm.

Just as the quote above states, it is important to actually experience the pathways to be able to make informed decisions about our futures. Therefore, our EXPO event will provide our community members the opportunity to meet our highly experienced staff who will assist with realistic yet aspirational subject selection information. During the day, students will also have the opportunity to meet with employers from a range of vocations and fields of work as well as a range of university providers. This is imperative for a young person's motivation, as it will hopefully provide them with a prescriptive and aspirational goal to achieve their pathways to success.

Much work is currently being done with all Year 10 and 11 students, as they complete their Career Action Plans in preparation for subject selection and EXPO. Please speak with your sons and daughters about their action plans as they are a focus for discussion for their future goals.

The EXPO event is also the time in which re-enrolment takes place. This is stage 1 of the EXPO event and must be undertaken before any course guidance is given.

Due to the ever increasing demand for places at the Kildare Campus, I would encourage all families to ensure that their re-enrolment paperwork and administration fee of \$100 is paid on the day of EXPO, Thursday 31st July.

I look forward to meeting all families; current, new and prospective, on the day.

Our pathways to success was evident this week with the large number of Kildare students receiving awards for academic excellence, merit and diligence. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all who achieved these awards and encourage those yet to receive an award this year to push for this goal for the end of year awards.



Penelope Georgeson:

It is with great pride that we congratulate Penelope Georgeson (Year 10), who was awarded joint 1st place for a cultural exchange scholarship for the Police Force. Penelope will be going to Italy to develop her cultural skills which will benefit her as a police officer in the future.

Insight SRC Surveys

I would like to thank all parents who have assisted with completing an Insight SRC Survey. If you have not completed one and would like to do so to give guidance for the development of the College, please contact me before Friday 29th July.



Election Process for School Captains – 2017

It is that time of the year already – election time for our 2017 School Captains. The process will be as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 25th July: | Announcement that “Nominations for College Captains for 2017 are now open” at assembly. |
| 12th August: | Nominations to be submitted. |
| 15th-19th August: | Interviews held with Mr Doherty, Mrs McCormack and current College Captains |
| 25th August: | Election Speeches to take place during Long LA Assembly |
| 31st August - 2nd Sept: | Approval sought with College Principal |
| 5th September: | Announcement with Morning Tea. |

I would invite all prospective Captains to consult with their parents and peers regarding nominations for these prestigious roles of service within our College community.

The Final Countdown!

My final message is to all students studying units 3+4 VCE, especially or Year 12 students. We now have around 50 days of school before the VCE examinations begin. All lessons and study periods must be used effectively and a realistic yet comprehensive study timetable must now exist in preparation for these very important and life changing examinations.

I wish these students the very best as they travel towards the end of this pathway, towards a successful life.

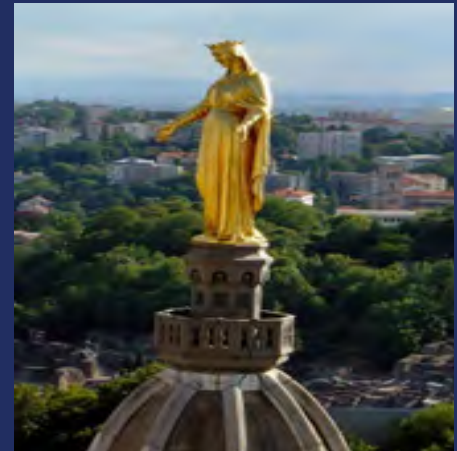
God Bless
Mr Doug Doherty





On the 23rd July 1816 twelve young men of the Society of Mary, five of them recently ordained: Jean Claude Courveille, Jean Claude Colin, Marcellin Champagnat, Etienne Declas and Etienne Terrallion, went up to the Marian Sanctuary at the Basilica of Our Lady of Fourviere, Lyon, to concelebrate in Courveille's first mass. Together they made a commitment or promise to begin the foundation of the Society of Mary.

And so, on the 23rd July, as we commemorate the promise of Fourviere, we too can renew our heartfelt commitment to be communities that are open and vibrant, deeply Samaritan in nature, taking up the invitation in this Jubilee year to be merciful as the Father is merciful. (Emili Turu, Superior General, June 2016)



Staff Retreat

The Annual Staff Retreat, 'Our Daily Bread', was held on 11 July. After the Introduction by Br. Hubert Williams, the each staff member attended two of six workshops on different ways to pray: Prayer as Scripture, Prayer as Art, Prayer As Music, Prayer as Social Justice, Prayer as Ecology, Prayer as Mary.

The workshops were each run by two staff members. They were very interesting, contemporary, real and the staff responded positively.

Immersion to Fiji

Three teachers and nine students will go on Immersion to live in the Marist Community and work in the Marist Schools in Suva, Fiji. This is the fourth group that is going on immersion and there is a palpable excitement among the group. They, with their parents and families, and are about to embark on a significant journey.



Cyclone Winston struck Fiji on 20 February this year. In the aftermath of the cyclone, the Marists in Fiji and Marist Solidarity in Australia have supported a range of projects. The group from Lavalla will live in the Marist house and work closely with the children in the three schools. They will also visit the families of some students and have a meal with them to build connections and learn solidarity.



World Youth Day and Youth Mass at St Michael's

BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL; FOR THEY SHALL RECEIVE MERCY. (MATTHEW 5:7)

World Youth Day will be held in Krakow, Poland from July 25 to August 1, 2016. The contingents, including one from the Diocese of Sale, have left for Poland. Those who experienced the World Youth day in Sydney will remember the excitement when millions of young people connect to the world around them, travelling on a spiritual pilgrimage. It is a life-changing experience that always leaves you feeling a part of something bigger than yourself.

As part of the celebration, St Michael's Parish will celebrate a Youth Mass on 31 July in the St Michael's Church on Kay Street at 6.00 pm. All young at heart are invited to attend.



Montana's Volunteering Experience



Montana McStay is a 2015 Lavalla Catholic College Graduate. She recently returned from 10 weeks volunteering in an Indigenous community in a remote area of Australia. This is her story.

'Well, what a life changing 10 weeks...these photos don't really show what an amazing time I really had in Oodnadatta. It all happened so quickly! Before I knew it I was on my way home, having to say goodbye to everyone I'd built such strong relationships with, especially the school kids and elders. I'm extremely grateful to AVI and SA & NT Volunteering for the opportunity to be able to travel and take part in this program, to develop the Oodnadatta

Community. Also, going to Alice Springs in week 6 with the women from Oodnadatta learning about Social Enterprise.

For me this was a massive achievement in gathering knowledge to start my own Aboriginal Art business in the near future. Not many people at 18 would have the chance to experience all that I have over the past couple months. The skills and qualities I've learnt over the time, I will be able to take with me whichever place I choose to go next.

This was a big dream I'd had since finishing year twelve last year. I knew I wanted to spend time in a Remote Aboriginal Community within Australia and somehow improve it as a whole, even if it was the slightest bit! I was prepared to take the challenge, and that it was. It made me appreciate what I have back at home more than what I did before.. things like having clean water straight from the tap I could fill my drink bottle with, instead of relying on the rain to refill the tank, not showering or washing in bore water, having service for my phone to work, roads to drive on that didn't have ruts or floods of water, roaming cows, kangaroos or emus shooting out in front of you, travelling less than 2 hrs to get the groceries, but I guess that was all part of it.

In the end It really did feel like home, and I was starting to see that I'd become a completely different person, starting to see life in a much simpler way, and even speaking the lingo! Which I'm still finding myself doing now, instead of being on my phone or watching TV I'd be at someone's house, walking around town, painting, basket weaving, or most of the time playing with the kids after school. I could go on and on and on, but all in all, the end result was what I'd visioned before leaving.



I achieved my goals, challenged myself, and I don't regret anything at all.'

by Montana McStay - Ex-Lavalla Student

Sports Enrichment

We congratulate Jarrod Burns (Year 10 Sports Enrichment) who has been selected to be a Central Umpire at the SSV AFL National Junior Championships. He will be travelling to Maroochydore, Queensland next week to participate in this prestigious honor and we wish him well.



Good2Gr8 Coaching - Sue Anderson

Sue Anderson, from 'Good2gr8 Coaching' shared with our students and staff some brilliant strategies in changing our thinking to reach our fullest potential. Sue challenged the way we respond to situations through a process called Neuro-Semantics which is a mixture of Neuro-Linguistic Programming, Developmental Psychology and Self Actualizing Psychology.



Sue lead workshops with students from Year 7 -9 to demonstrate strategies in responding to situations that come up in our everyday life. We explored our own thinking patterns and Sue challenged some of our existing beliefs. Sue reminded us all that we have the power to choose how we want to feel, think, say and do. Sue spoke with our Sports Enrichment students about setting goals, 'black and white' thinking and pushing forward with a Growth Mindset.

Special thanks to Karen Joyce and Daniel Scholes for organizing this event.

Cross Country - State Championships

Eleven Lavalla Catholic College athletes qualified for the SSV Cross Country State Championships after a solid performance at the Regional Championships held recently at Lardner Park.

Hugh Dunbar set the tone early in the 13 year boy's event with a time of 10.08 to claim a fifth place finish.

The team of Hugh Dunbar, Joshua Lyons, Kyle Whateley and Nathaniel Duffy finished third overall in their age group.

Monique Lapenta captured first place in the 13 year girl's event in a time of 10.40 with fellow athletes Isabella Bettridge finishing 10th, Chelsea Lawn coming 21st and Summah Gardiner finishing 39th. This enabled the girls to finish second overall.



Jack Murray produced a fourth place finish in the 14 boy's event in a time 10.12 to lead a strong performance by the boy's team. Luis D'Angelo (10th), Blair Rooney (19th), Jacob Sova (30th) and Damian Hough (33rd) were narrowly edge out for a second place finish in the team calculations.

Highlight of the day was Riley Evans (1st) and Tyler Morley (2nd) leading the way in the 15 year boy's event with outstanding performances also coming from Colby Morley (6th), Archie Grant (10th) and Flynn Shields 18th) to capture first place in the team event.

We wish these athletes all the very best in their endeavours to perform well at the State Championships in Bundoora on Thursday, June 14th.



Term 3

Date	Campus	Event	Further Information
Thu 28th July	ST PAUL'S	Year 9 VCAL Visits	
Thu 28th July	ST PAUL'S	Australian Maths Competition	
Thu 4th August	KILDARE	Careers & Courses Expo	11.00am - 4.00pm
Fri 5th August	BOTH	STUDENT FREE DAY	
Sun 7 - Fri 12 August	KILDARE	Outdoor REC Snow Camp	
Mon 8th August	KILDARE	VTAC Parent & Student Information Session	6.00 - 8.00pm
Wed 10 - Thu 11 Aug	KILDARE	Year 10 Retreat	Compulsory College Event
Wed 10 - Thu 11 Aug	KILDARE	Subject Selections	Year 11 & 12 Students 2017
Fri 12 - Sun 14 Aug	KILDARE	REMAR Gold Retreat	
Wed 17th Aug	KILDARE	Subject Selections	Year 10 Students 2017
Mon 22 - Fri 26 Aug	KILDARE	LA/AR Interview Week	
Wed 31 Aug - Thu 1 Sep	KILDARE	Year 11 Retreat	Compulsory College Event
Wed 31st Aug	KILDARE	REMAR Gold Graduation	
Tue 6th Sep	KILDARE	Annual Music Concert	
Thu 8 - 29th Sep	KILDARE	Italian Study Tour	
Fri 9th Sep	KILDARE	60th Anniversary Mass	Compulsory College Event
Thu 15 - Fri 16 Sep	KILDARE	Parent Teacher Interviews	4.00 - 7.00 pm Thurs 15th 8.00am - 12pm Fri 16th
Thu 15th Sep	BOTH	END OF TERM 3	
Fri 16th Sep	BOTH	STUDENT FREE DAY	

2nd Hand Uniform Shop

@ St Paul's Campus
Open 3.30 - 6.00pm

21 July

4 August

18 August

1 September

15th September



Lowes in Mid Valley are having a sale on some of our Lavalla uniform items. With more cold weather to come, now is a great time to purchase the items listed below.

The sale will run from Thursday 21st of July – Sunday 7th August

The following items will be reduced at this time:

Track pants – Reduced from \$49.99	NOW \$29.99
Rugby Jumper – Reduced from \$84.99	NOW \$49.99
Girls Kilt – Reduced from \$98.50	NOW \$65.99

During this sale period, sale items listed above will also be available at the reduced price online.



Building parent-school partnerships

WORDS Michael Grose

Tolerance: a vital ingredient for your child's SUCCESS

Kids who accept differences in others are setting themselves up for success in the world of diversity that they will enter.

Want your child to be successful way past the confines of the school gate?

Then you need to make sure your child is tolerant of individual differences and accepting of children and adults who look and act differently to them.

There's no doubt that success in today's world depends on the ability to understand, appreciate and work with others. The child who is open to differences is likely to have more opportunities in school, in business and in life in general.

Schools are diverse places

Walk into any school ground in Australia and you'll witness diversity firsthand. You're likely to see children from many different cultural, racial and family backgrounds. You'll also see kids with different needs and diverse ways of expressing themselves. Some kids will wear their hearts on their sleeves, while others will be taciturn and quiet. Tolerant kids are accepting of these differences.

They make friends with children and young people who may look and act differently to them.

Intolerance breeds bullying

Intolerance, or prejudice, is at the heart of a great deal of the bullying that occurs among children and young people. Kids who look

and act differently or who are more isolated often experience bullying for no apparent reason other than the fact that they are 'different'. Whole-hearted acceptance and even appreciation Tolerance: a vital ingredient for your child's success of differences is a preventative bullying measure that we can all support.

Tolerance starts at home

Kids learn attitudes such as tolerance from those around them. Children in primary school usually reflect the attitudes of their parents. While adolescents are strongly influenced by their peers, parental attitudes still have a significant impact on their attitudes to other people. In short, if you want your child to be accepting of differences – whether they are racial, cultural, behavioural or in sexual orientation – then make tolerance a family trait.

Here's how:

Help your child feel accepted, respected, and valued. When your child feels good about himself, he is more able to treat others respectfully.

Model acceptance. Kids learn what they live so make sure you welcome differences in others, and be sensitive to cultural or racial stereotypes. It also helps on a practical level to discuss prejudice and stereotypes when they occur in the media.

Challenge prejudice or narrow-minded views. Sometimes kids, knowingly or unknowingly, can say the cruellest things about others. As a parent respectfully remind your child or young person about the impact that a narrow view can have on his or her own behaviour as well as on those it may be directed towards. Intolerance of diversity is an attitude that parents should make a stand against.

Answer kids' questions about differences honestly and respectfully. Teach your kids that it is acceptable to notice and discuss differences as long as it is done with respect.

Respect individual differences within your own family. Your ability to accept your children's differing abilities, interests and styles will go a long way towards establishing an attitude of tolerance in the children themselves. By valuing the uniqueness of each member of your family you are teaching your kids to value the strengths in others, no matter how diverse. Modern Australia is such a wonderful culturally-rich place. This diversity is part of its magic. One way to make sure our children fully appreciate this richness is to fully embrace tolerance in everything we do.

Michael Grose 



Want more ideas to help you raise confident kids and resilient young people? Subscribe to Happy Kids newsletter, my **FREE** weekly email parenting guide at parentingideas.com.au. You'll be so glad you did.



EVERY DAY COUNTS

How can I get my teenager to school?

Many teenagers seek independence and think they know best. No matter how hard parents try, some students may be reluctant or refuse to go to school. These are some ideas which may assist parents to deal with teenagers and school refusal. Addressing this attendance issues promptly and setting up good patterns in adolescence can lead to future success.

Did you know?

- Patterns of late arrival at school or missing classes are early warning signs
- Missing one day of school each week adds up to 2 months missed over a year
- Each day absent in high school has an impact on skill development and social connections
- Poor attendance may be associated with future unemployment, criminal activity, substance abuse, and poorer health and life expectancy

Some causes of school problems

Some of the more common causes of school problems are underlying learning difficulties or learning disabilities or behavioural or emotional issues. But there are many other reasons why a young person might not be engaging fully in their education.

School factors might include:

- bullying
- disliking, or not feeling connected to, the school culture or environment
- disliking school subjects, not liking the choice of subjects, or not feeling challenged by the work

- poor school or academic support, especially in relation to heavy workloads
- not getting along with teachers or other students at school
- competing demands on time, such as extracurricular activities

Personal factors might include:

- chronic illness
- intellectual or cognitive disability
- behavioural or developmental difficulties or disorders
- mental health issues such as depression or anxiety
- history of abuse and neglect
- poor self-concept or self-esteem
- poor communication skills
- poor social skills
- difficulty with listening, concentrating or sitting still.

Family factors might include:

- parents who aren't involved in their child's education
- a home environment that doesn't or can't adequately support a young person's learning
- family problems such as relationship breakdowns
- competing family or social responsibilities, such as caring for family members, or working outside school hours

What you can do

- Act early
- Talk about the importance of showing up to school every day, make that the expectation. Regular attendance at school sets up good behaviours for regular attendance at work.
- Help your teenager maintain daily routines such as finishing homework and getting a good night's sleep. On average, teenagers need 8-9 hours sleep to be healthy and alert. You may also need to monitor their use of the Internet, mobile phone and TV at night to ensure they are not staying up too late or being disturbed while sleeping.
- Try not to schedule hair, dental or medical

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g school hours. Arrange family holidays during scheduled school holidays so that they don't miss out on classes and feel left behind. If it is necessary to be absent from school for an extended period, arrange with your school for a Student Absence Learning Plan.

- Don't let your teenager stay home unless genuinely sick. Complaints of headaches or stomach aches may be signs of anxiety.
- If your teenager wants to stay home to finish an assignment, rather than letting them stay home, expect them to go to school – make attendance the number one priority. Later, you can discuss with them how they can improve their study habits or adjust their schedule.
- If your school has an assessment calendar on its website, use this to help your teenager plan their study so that they avoid working late the night before an assignment is due.
- Be sure to set a good example – how you meet your commitments impacts on how they will meet theirs.
- Talk to your teenager. What are their feelings about school? What interests them at school? Are there any difficult situations? It helps if you open these discussions in a relaxed way so that your teenager knows you are demonstrating concern, not authority.
- Try to be aware of your teenager's social contacts. Peer influence can lead to skipping school, while students without many friends can feel isolated.
- Encourage meaningful extracurricular activities that your teenager enjoys, such as sports and clubs, to develop positive relationships and experience success outside of a classroom setting. These activities can help your child feel part of the group, important to the school, and more motivated.
- Set clear parameters around part-time work. Make sure that the hours your teenager is working do not impact on their ability to go to school the next day, or interfere with school assessment expectations or exam preparation

- Familiarise yourself with the school's attendance policy. This can help when trying to reason with teenagers.
- Monitor your teenager's attendance and school performance. Periodically check with their teachers to find out how things are going. If you find it difficult to contact several different teachers by phone, try email. Alternatively, the year level coordinator may be a helpful point of contact in relation to specific issues.
- Ask your teenager's school about what types of flexible or blended learning options they offer.

Remember

You can talk with school staff (such as a teacher, year level coordinator, wellbeing staff, careers staff, assistant principal or principal) to find out what support they can provide to keep your teenager attending and engaged.

USEFUL WEBSITES/CONTACTS

www.raisingchildren.net.au

www.headspace.org.au

www.education.vic.gov.au

www.youthbeyondblue.org.au

www.kidshelp.com.au or phone **1800 55 1800**, 24 hours a day, 7 days

Parentline – phone 13 22 89 8.00am to midnight seven days a week