Principal's Report:

BYOD EVENING

The school is presenting an information session for all parents on the Bring Your Own Device (iPad) strategy to be held on Thursday 17th March at 5pm (during the School Disco). This evening is designed to provide you with information regarding the school’s decision to move in this direction and answer any questions/concerns you may have. While this evening is targeted for parents from Years 3-6, all parents are very welcome.

A light supper will also be provided. When you receive the note, please RSVP as soon as possible to assist with catering.

Swimming Carnival

The school swimming carnival last week was an absolutely fantastic event. This day could not have been so successful without the strong community support and professionalism of all staff. The facilities were excellent and all students had a fantastic day. I would like to thank Mr Springall, Miss Butler and Mr Morhi for their outstanding organisation. Results and district information have been distributed and best of luck to the swimmers representing the school at the East Hills PSSA Carnival tomorrow.

Last Thursday at the school assembly, I acknowledged two outstanding students whose behaviour and support for one of their peers was exemplary during the swimming carnival. I was informed by a parent note that Matthew Papagianopoulos and Sulaiman Syed cared for another student who was left out of a team during the novelty events. They encouraged and supported him which led to him trying even harder. It is this type of behaviour we wish to see all the time. I am very proud of these boys, well done!

Leaders of Today

Next week our Captains and Vice Captains will be attending a work shop with students from all over Sydney South West schools on Leadership at Tower Street PS. I am sure they will get some great experiences networking with other students and represent the school with distinction.
Merit Awards

The merit system is an integral part of the Student Welfare program at Revesby South Public School. These rules and rights encourage students to accept responsibility for their behavioural choices, to make and accept healthy and safe decisions and to monitor and apply self-management to their own behaviour.

The Merit system is embedded into our school rules Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be an Active Learner. Classroom teachers award students in line with the expectations linked to our school rules.

The Merit system will begin at the beginning of each school year.

‘Strive to Succeed’ certificates are presented weekly at school assemblies. They are awarded by classroom teachers to children following the school rules Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be an Active Learner. Each class teacher will hand out a minimum of 3 (4 for 3-6) certificates per week. If no there is no assembly, awards will be handed out in class.

Class awards will be available for teachers to use at their discretion. They are able to tie them into their own classroom merit system.

Upon review of the number of Silver and Gold awards given in 2015, the school in consultation with the P&C, have decided to reduce the overall number of certificates needed to receive a Silver or Gold award. Furthermore, Yr 3-6 teachers can now give a 4th award due to the larger class sizes.

Students who collect 3 Strive to Succeed certificates will receive a Bronze Award.

Students who collect 6 Strive to Succeed certificates will receive a Silver Award.

Students who collect 11 Strive to Succeed certificates will receive a Gold Award.

Sun Safety

It has been well publicised that Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world, with many recorded deaths each year. Skin cancer and related skin damage are the result of frequent and unprotected exposure to the sun. By the age of fifteen years many children have developed irreversible skin damage.

Most skin cancers and related skin damage can be prevented by protecting the skin from the sun and avoiding exposure when UV is at its highest in the middle of the school day.

Families, schools and communities share responsibility for the health, safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people in their care. The school community must work together to take all reasonable actions to protect students from risk of harm that can be
reasonably predicted due to ultraviolet radiation from the sun.

By reducing exposure to the sun and increasing the uptake of sun safe strategies, schools can make a significant contribution to community efforts to reduce skin cancer and related skin damage.

Our school supports students to understand why sun safety is important and to take action to protect themselves such as:

- reducing their exposure to the sun wherever possible
- wearing appropriate hats and clothing
- remaining in the shade wherever possible, particularly during peak UV times
- participating in sun protection activities
- using 30+ broad spectrum sunscreens worn from home and reapplied at school when necessary

Teachers, parents and carers and visitors to the school all have a role to model sun safety, for example, wearing a broad brimmed hat for school activities held outside.

In order to encourage positive sun safe behaviour in the students at Revesby South Public School, a number of recommendations have been developed to provide informed behaviours but most importantly a ‘No Hat, Play in the Shade’ policy exists to protect all students during lunch and afternoon tea periods.

Please ensure your child has a school hat every day.

Chris Whitten
Principal
Dear Parents

Parent/Teacher interviews will be held from 3.30pm – 6pm on Tuesday 29th March – Friday 1st April. Please note some varied teacher times.

You can now book interviews at times that suit YOUR FAMILY BEST. Go to www.schoolinterviews.com.au and follow these simple instructions.

BOOKINGS OPEN 7th March at 9:30am and CLOSE 22nd March at 3pm.

School event code

s6jv9 Go

Go to www.schoolinterviews.com.au

***You can encourage more traffic to your schools website, AND avoid parents typing in the wrong URL, if you ask parents to click on a link on the schools website, instead of giving them our web address – use this link****


Enter THIS school event code. Then follow the 3 simple steps.

1. Enter your details
2. Choose teachers
3. Choose times

When you click finish, your interview timetable will be emailed to you automatically - check your junk mail folder if you do not receive your email immediately.

You can return to www.schoolinterviews.com.au at any time, and change your interviews - until bookings close.

For parents that don’t have access to the internet at home, at work, at a friend’s house or on their phones, assistance is available at the school office or phone the school on 9773 8886. Interviews are strictly 10mins and spaces are limited. If you require more time, please contact your teacher directly to make alternative arrangements.

Parents can change their interview bookings, any time prior to the closing date, by re-visiting the www.schoolinterviews.com.au website, and using the event code. Remember to use the same name and email address, you used when you made your original booking. Parents wishing to change their interview times after the closing date, should contact the school directly on: 9773 8886.

Vanessa Stephens
Chris Whitten
Principal
Trilogy Schools
MEGA Fete
SUNDAY
3RD APRIL 2016
10AM – 4PM

PLAYFORD PARK, GIBSON AVENUE, PADSTOW

RIDES! FOOD STALLS! DUNK TANK
CELEBRITIES!
- DUNK YOUR PRINCIPAL & CELEBRITIES!
SPORTING STARS!
AND MUCH MUCH MORE!

A GREAT FUN DAY FOR ALL THE FAMILY!

Supporting Broderick Gillawarna,
Caroline Chisholm and George Bass
Schools – Bankstown area schools
for children with disabilities
OFFICE NEWS:

At this time of the year a high volume of money is coming into the office.

When sending in money/permission notes for your child/ren, to ensure they don’t miss out on any activity, please enclose separate permission notes for each child and for each school activity into a clearly marked envelope stating child’s name, class and what the money is for.

If you have more than one child/activity, you may enclose cash/cheque and permission notes into one envelope.

PLEASE NOTE:

For any canteen related orders money must be put into separate envelopes and given directly to the canteen for them to process.
Did you know….? Each and every deposit earns the school a 5% commission.

Total commission earned for the school in 2015 was $1,016.78.

125 students banked in 2015. Total deposits into students bank accounts was $14,135.53.

ACCOUNT OPENING DAY - We will be holding an account opening day (outside the library) on Thursday, 24th March 2016. Our School Banking Specialist will be available from 8.40am to 9.30am. You just need to bring your driver’s licence or passport for Identification Purposes. Please see attached flyer for more details.

REWARDS - Congratulations to the students who redeemed their Dollarmite tokens for various rewards as detailed below:-


WILDLIFE WRITERS SET - Henry Zhu - 2R.

This year’s theme is “Outback Adventure”. Current rewards available are the Flying Snake Tail and Wildlife Writers Set. Two more rewards will be released at the start of Term 2.

Due to the increase in students banking and assembly being on Thursday afternoons at 2.30pm, bank books will be distributed back to the students on Friday.

REMEMBER- School Banking Day is every Thursday!
For any further information please contact me on 0411 33 11 58.
Catherine White
School Banking Co-ordinator
Commonwealth Bank School Banking

School Banking is here

The Commonwealth Bank School Banking program is at Revesby South Public School. It's a great way to give your child a financial head start by helping them to learn about good money management and the importance of saving.

What is School Banking?
School Banking is a program designed to help your child develop strong financial literacy skills for the future. With the help of the School Banking Coordinators, children can start saving regularly through the school. Best of all, the School Banking program makes saving fun with an exciting Rewards Program that encourages regular participation.

Encouraging good saving habits
School Banking gives children hands-on experience at handling money and seeing it grow. The program helps them develop the knowledge, independence and confidence they need to manage their finances successfully as they get older.

Earning fun rewards
Every time your child makes a deposit through the School Banking program, regardless of how much, they will receive a cool Dollarmite token. Once they have saved 10 tokens they can swap them for fun Dollarmite rewards.

How does your child get involved?
In order to participate in the School Banking program, your child will need a Commonwealth Bank Youthsaver account which can be opened at ANY branch of the Commonwealth Bank convenient to you. If you are an existing customer with NetBank access, you can open an account online. Simply logon as usual, click the ‘offers and apply’ tab, then select ‘accounts’ and ‘Youthsaver’. For either option you will need to have your child’s birth certificate and your driver’s license for identification.

Alternatively, our School Banking Specialist will be at our school on the following days to take applications. For this option, you need only supply your driver’s license.

Thursday 24th March 2016
starting at 8.40am

Benefits to our school
When your child completes their first deposit at school on Banking Day, our school receives $5.00 commission. A further 5% commission will be paid on all deposits made at the school. It is a great way for our school to raise funds while your child learns all the important lessons of saving money on a regular basis.

Please bring your bankbook to school every week and start school banking.

Your local Commonwealth Bank branch is Revesby Branch.

We hope you will consider participating in the School Banking program, as we know your child will benefit from banking each week.
Thank you all for supporting the school fundraising cookbook Food Glorious Food. Copies are still available for $30 each. Our professionally published cookbook has sold over 700 copies! All money raised is pure profit and will be spent on a new playground at school. We are very excited! An order form will be coming home shortly. If you would like to order online visit www.foodgloriousfood.org.au and you can pay via credit card and pick up from the school. A great gift and a great way to support our school.

P and C Fundraising Co-Ordinators
## Canteen Roster Term 1 2016

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KU Milperra Preschool
Enrolling Now for 2016!

We offer a high quality, community-based preschool program for children aged 3 to 5 years old, including:

► A safe and nurturing environment
► An educational play-based curriculum
► Full transition-to-school program
► University Qualified Educators
► Approved for CCB and CCR
► Flexible operating hours from 8:15am – 4:15pm

Rated as ‘Exceeding’ the National Quality Standard

For more information, or to enquire about enrolling your child, visit www.ku.com.au or contact:

KU Milperra Preschool
12 Amiens Avenue,
Milperra, NSW 2214
T 02 9772 2827
E ku.milperra@ku.com.au

Proudly a not for profit organisation
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**TERM 1**

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Weekly lessons now at your School!
Keyboard, Guitar, Drums, Singing, Ukulele, Rock Band

BOOK NOW!
Be quick. Limited spaces available!
*PHONE 1300 168 742 * ONLINE www.themusicbus.com.au

Join our team – we’re hiring!
August 9 is Census night and the Australian Bureau of Statistics is looking for 2,500 motivated and community minded Area Supervisors to join our team across Australia.

Area Supervisors:
• Are temporary casual jobs, with flexible working hours
• Will recruit, train and lead a small team of field staff to help deliver the 2016 Census
• Will earn $34.76 per hour (inclusive of 25% loading).

Applications open 1 February 2016. Apply online at abs.gov.au/careers
Make a difference in your community and help shape its future.
Skoolbag is a mobile App for your school to communicate directly to both parents and students. It works through both smart phones and smart devices (such as iPads and Android Tablets). Ideal for:

- School, free push notification alerts
- School events
- School newsletters
- School documents
- School RSS feeds
- School social media (Facebook, Twitter)

How To Install Skoolbag On Your Smartphone

**iPhone & iPad Users**

1. Click the "App Store" icon on your Apple device.
2. Type your school name in the search, using suburb name will help.
3. If iPhone, you will see your school appear, click "Free" then "install".
4. If iPad, change the drop list to "iPhone Apps", your school will then be visible, click "Free" then "install".
5. When installed click "Open"
6. Select "OK" to receive push notifications, when asked.
7. Click the "More" button on the bottom right of the App, then "Setup".
8. Toggle on the Push Categories that are applicable for you.

**Android Users**

You must first have signed up with a Google Account before installing the app.

1. Click the "Play Store" button on your Android Device
2. Click the magnifying glass icon at the top and type in your school name, using suburb name will help.
3. Click the school name when it appears in the search.
4. Click the "Install" button.
5. Click "Accept" for various permissions (please note, we do not modify any of your personal data on your device).
6. Click "Open" when installed.
7. Click the "More" button on the bottom right of the App, then "Setup".
8. Toggle on the Push Categories that are applicable for you.

Don’t forget to like us on Facebook! 

Find out more at www.skoolbag.com.au
From the Coordinators....
Welcome to the new year, and new school term. 2016 sees Nicole’s return from maternity leave three days a week (Monday-Wednesday), and Kim staying on in the School-Link role two days per week (Tuesday and Friday). Kim and Nicole are co-located with the Child, Adolescent Mental Health Service at Rivendell, Concord, and cover the Sydney Local Health District (Canada Bay, Burwood, Strathfield, Ashfield, Canterbury, Marrickville, Leichhardt and part of City of Sydney Local Government Areas). This year we will continue to offer excellent training, opportunities to network with Education, Health and Community Sector Colleagues, resources for your service or school and the School-Link Consultation Service, as well as introducing some exciting new projects. Stay tuned, and we look forward to working with you this year!

Nicole and Kim

In this edition:

Digital Resources – start a conversation about mental well being with your students or staff  pg 2

Professional Development opportunities  pg 3-4

Parent Resources  pg 5

Services for young people – including a new online directory  pg 6-8

Hot Topic: School refusal by Kim Eisler  pg 9-11

School-Link Contact and important announcement from FaCS  pg 12

Please circulate to: Executive staff
School Counsellor
Welfare staff
Copy for staff room
Electronic distribution to colleagues
Digital Resources– Video Clips

These videos are an effective way for young people to begin thinking about well being and help seeking. Because they are short, thought provoking and accessible, they are easily slotted into a lesson plan or discussion. Or use as a part of professional development for staff. Just click on the link or type it into your browser search.

Dylan's Story
Package available from your School-Link Coordinator

This 2 minute video is part of a package aimed at school staff to encourage early detection of well-being issues and referral of students. It is accompanied by discussion questions, fact sheet and evaluation (call School-Link on 9736 9853 for more info). Dylan is having some troubles at school– struggling in class, making friends and managing emotions......until a teacher makes some good calls.

In My Shoes
The Gender Centre, NSW
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDuVbsq0eM0

What’s it like growing up transgender? 'In My Shoes' asks five transgender young people what it’s like to be them - the awesome times, the challenges and how they’ve gotten through them. This short, collaborative documentary film is an initiative of the Transgender Anti-Violence Project at The Gender Centre Inc., NSW and is produced by Tahlia Triage, the Transgender Anti-Violence Project (TAVP) Officer.

The Womps
https://vimeo.com/148567708

"What is a Womp? Womps are a metaphor for the issues or troubles in our lives that we may not be able to change or control. They are the ugly, horrible critters that cling onto our backs and mutter negative phrases into our ear. They may be what gets in the way of doing the things we enjoy. They could just be making each day a little more difficult.

By discussing issues and problems using Womps, young teenagers and children are given a buffer to talk about things they may otherwise have trouble bringing up. It opens up a dialogue for difficult, hard to approach subjects and the animation also gives tips and suggestions on how to manage Womps and reach out for help through the right channels. The Womps core message is about training your Womps, learning about them and how to live functionally with them, delivered through realistic and practical advice that is also positive and uplifting."

Alessandro Donagh – De Marchi

Alessandro is a member of the headspace Campbelltown and headspace National Youth Reference Group. His poem The WOMPS has been developed into a great video resource for teachers to use to start conversations with young people around mental health and help seeking. If you have any further questions please contact Vicki Papa, the community development and engagement officer at headspace Camperdown: vicki.papa@gmail.com
Positive psychology and young people

Youth Health Forums are stimulating, half-day forums that cover a wide range of adolescent health and wellbeing issues, appealing to health, education, community, welfare professionals and students. At this Forum, we will focus on positive psychology and young people.

Time: 8.30am -12.30pm
Venue: Lorimer Dods Lecture Theatre, The Children’s Hospital at Westmead

Program includes:

- Building resilience in young people – what do protective health assets offer?
- An introduction to positive psychology for youth and change
- Warranggal: Empower today – positive tomorrows
- Using positive psychology in paediatric pain management
- Mindfulness and gratitude
- Panel discussion

RSVP: Friday 4 March 2016
Cost: $35 (incl.GST)
Free for under 24 years of age and unwaged
Registration: Click here to register or via the Kids and Families website: www.kidsfamilies.health.nsw.gov.au (under Events).
Or phone 9526 1221.

Program enquiries:
Ms Wui-Ken Yap 02 9424 5846/Ms Hulya Bickey 9424 5833 email: wuyap@doh.health.nsw.gov.au; hulya.bickey@doh.health.nsw.gov.au

More 2016 Youth Health Forum dates for your diaries:

- 24 August 2016 (Wednesday)-Tackling obesity
- 9 November 2016 (Wednesday)-Young people with a parent with mental illness and/or substance use issues

Program and registration will be available one month prior to the Forum.

KidsMatter and Mindmatters are the Australian mental health and well-being initiatives funded by the Australian Government and beyondblue to provide frameworks to primary and secondary schools to take care of student’s mental health needs

Professional Learning Events for Sydney:

Getting Started For Action Teams
- 2nd March 8.30am– 3.30pm
- 9th March 8.30am– 3.30pm
- 17th March 8.30am– 3.30pm
- 4 April (Parramatta) 8.30am -3.30pm

Component 1: A positive school community
- 3 March 8.30am– 3.30pm
- 10 March 8.30am– 3.30pm
- 18 March 8.30am– 3.30pm
- 5 April (Parramatta) 8.30am– 3.30pm

More info and register for these free events:
NSW@kidsmatter.edu.au
Ph 8333 9650

MindMatters

Get your high school started with MindMatters:

Leadership Briefing:
11 March (Bankstown)
1 April (Sydney)

Getting Started:
4 March (Wolli Creek)
14 March (North Ryde)

Registration: mindmatters.edu.au
(Create an account, go to “Get involved” and register for your event.)
More info: Beth Bull
#youcansitwithme

YOU CAN SIT WITH ME is an anti-bullying campaign. It is a simple wristband with a life changing message.

YOU CAN SIT WITH ME is a highly visible wristband worn by students in schools, sports clubs and community groups to show that they welcome anyone to sit with them and that they are inclusive.

A student who feels lonely or isolated can go up to a fellow student wearing one of these yellow wristbands and know they’ll be included – no questions asked. Students who wear the wristband are trained in what to do and say if someone comes to sit with them. At no time does the student need to offer advice nor intervene in the problem, rather just offer a safe place to sit and refer them to a teacher if they feel they need help. Their role is just to be a friendly face and to alert a teacher if the student is upset.

For the student wearing the wristband, it gives them a sense of pride and leadership. (Also we let kids know that if they want to stop wearing the wristband at any time, that’s okay too.)

For more information, go to: www.youcansitwithme.org

Proceeds from the sale of these bands go to the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation

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Friday, 19 August 2016
9am - 5pm
Sydney Town Hall

MAIN PROGRAM:
- The Power of Play and Humour; Jean-Paul Bell
- Teaching Boys Respectful Relationships; Dr Justin Coulson,
- ‘Flying High’: Ice, Ecstasy, Cocaine and Young People; Paul Dillon,
- What 90,000 Young People Can Teach Us About Resilience; Andrew Fuller,
- Digital Citizenship; Greg Gebhart,
- Internet Connected Toys and Play: What You Need to Know; Dr Kate Highfield,
- Radicalisation and Vulnerable Youth; Dr Clarke Jones,
- Understanding Self-Harm and Supporting Young People; Dr Claire Kelly,
- Practical Strategies to Tackle Racism and Identity-Based Bullying in Schools; Dr Naomi Priest,
- Understanding and Addressing Racism and Identity-Based Bullying in Schools; Dr Naomi Priest,
- Online and Technology-Based Mental Health Support and Intervention; Speaker TBA

Super Early Bird and Group Discount rates available: www.generationnext.com.au

Teachers will get up to 5.5 hours QTC Registered PD at Proficient Teacher Level
TRANSITION TO SCHOOL
FREE information sessions for
Parents of children with additional needs

Do you have a child with additional needs who is not yet at school?
Do you have questions about how best to help your child transition to school?
Do you want to know more about helping your child with additional needs to learn and thrive at school?

These information sessions are:
- Open to any parent of a child with additional needs who has not started school
- Presented by representatives from Department of Education (State schools), Catholic Education Office, Association of Independent Schools and Aspect
- Provide information about enrolment and support for learning and other needs
  Include question and answer time

17 March, 2016, 10am – 12noon
St Anthony’s Family Care, 9 Alexandra Ave, Croydon
Phone 9747 5782

24 March, 2016, 10am – 12noon
Sylvania Vale, 2 Mikarie Place, Kirrawee
Phone 8536 0122, nbreen@svylvanvale.com.au

4 May 2016, 6.30pm – 8pm
Plumtree, Yabsley Ave
Jarvie Park, Marrickville.
Phone 9572 8840, info@plumtree.org.au

10 May 2016, 10am – 12noon
Koorana, Belmore Youth Centre
38 Redman Parade, Belmore.
Phone 9750-4100

Achieving School Success

A free digital resource for families from non-English speaking backgrounds to navigate the Australian Education System and children’s services

Families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds can now access a new training package to assist them in their transition to Australia.

Initiated by the Department of Family and Community Services (FACS), the program assists parents to better support their school aged children by providing a safe and secure home, understanding how to navigate the education system and knowing where to turn for assistance. Achieving School Success represents a partnership between multiple community organisations and government departments.

Achieving School Success has already been delivered to hundreds of families across Greater Sydney and with demand for the program building, this free digital training package will mobilise the initiative and facilitate its use in even the most remote of Australian communities.

The training package has been designed for easy use within the community sector. It includes translated program resources, family activities and content designed to explain the key features of the Australian education system. It also demonstrates the importance of positive family support and safe home environments in child academic and life success.

Download the Achieving School Success training package.


This project has been organised and funded by the Inner West and South East Areas of Sydney Early Childhood Intervention Coordination Project, an initiative of ADHC
Youth Point Online Directory

A new online directory for young people and service providers— Easy to navigate, up-to-date details about youth services in the Sydney and South East areas.

THE YOUTH POINT
online information and services
directory for young people

www.youthpoint.com.au

Accommodation Education Health Casework Counselling Legal Employment and more...

For young people under 25 and the services that work with them in Sydney and South East Sydney

Youth Block
have relocated to
288 Abercrombie St
Redfern
Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

Youthblock provides free, safe and confidential support, counselling, information and health services for young people aged 12 - 25 who live or spend time in the Sydney Local Health District (Inner West of Sydney).

- Nursing and Medical (General, hearing, vision, blood pressure, dental referrals, sexual and reproductive health, pregnancy support and care, immunisation, quit smoking support with free NRT patches.)
- Counselling
- Case management
- Referral

Referral: Call 9562 5640 9am- 5pm Mon-Fri (except Wed) and speak to the Intake worker. Depending on capacity, Youthblock staff are willing to meet young people at your service or school if this is more convenient for the young person.

You don’t need a medicare card
It’s best for you to ring us to make an appointment but you can also drop into our Nursing Clinic on Mondays 1pm-5pm and Fridays from 9am-2pm.

- Health promotion:
Youthblock offers interactive, flexible and educational health promotion programs for young people.

Online Safety
Explores issues of personal safety when using your phone and the internet. Young people reflect on the strengths and dangers of online spaces and learn tools to navigate these worlds while protecting their privacy and sense of identity.

Taking Charge (Youth Health Workshop)
Educates young people about how to take charge of their own health as a young adult; how to apply for a Medicare Card and health care card, health related terms, ways in which they can look after their own health.

For more info about these and other workshops available, contact:
Kristian.Reyes@sswhs.nsw.gov.au
Suwana.Combo@sswhs.nsw.gov.au
Does your school have an issue with smoking? Find out more about our FREE Quit Smoking Program.

What’s involved?
- Health promotion workshops held at your school
- Nicotine Replacement Therapy patches and gum
- 10 individual face to face sessions with the Youthblock Nurse
- Nurse visits to your school

For more information please contact us on:
(02) 9562 5640
Youthblock@sswhs.nsw.gov.au

Confidential. Safe. Free
No Medicare Card needed

Youthblock
Youth Health Service

Address:
288 Abercrombie Street Redfern
NSW 2008
The AIME Program

Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME) is a dynamic educational program that is proven to support Indigenous students through high school and into university, employment or further education at the same rate as all Australian students. AIME gives Indigenous students the skills, opportunities, belief and confidence to grow and succeed.

In 2014, 93.2% of the AIME Year 12 cohort completed Year 12. This was 6.7 percentage points higher than the national non-Indigenous Year 12 attainment rate and 34.7 percentage points higher than the national Indigenous rate. AIME students are also leading the way in closing the gap on post-school pathways into university, further education and training and employment. In 2014-15, 76% of AIME Year 12 students transitioned into positive post-school pathways, 36 percentage points above the national Indigenous rate of 40% and just above the national non-Indigenous rate of 75%.

Across the country, AIME delivers a range of different programs. The Core Program targets local Indigenous high school students who attend schools that are able to visit an AIME partner university campus on a weekly basis. The Outreach Program extends the AIME experience to Indigenous high school students from further afield through a more intensive full day format.

How do I get AIME to my school? Follow the link:
https://aimementoring.com/involve/school/
As the holidays end and we start a new school year there are parents who will struggle to convince their child that it’s time to go back. Many children might refuse or resist for a few days, or at some time during their school life, but for some the absences become regular events and the resistance they give their parents is strong and persistent.

The reasons why children refuse to attend school are often complex and may be the result of a combination of factors. A child may have previous issues with anxiety and separation. It may be a learned behaviour where staying at home has helped avoid the anxious feelings associated with school and thus reinforces the behaviour of staying home.

Some of the common contributors are:

- family problems, such as illness or financial stress
- domestic violence
- Young carers- children with caring or other responsibilities
- learning difficulties
- feeling isolated or friendless
- mental health issues (frequently anxiety or depression)
- low resilience or self-esteem
- absence of faith or hope in the school
- disorganised families
- parents who have low educational aspirations
- being bullied or harassed
- dislike of particular lessons or activities
- over or under achievers

School Refusal vs Truancy

School Refusal

- Severe emotional distress about going to school; may include anxiety, temper tantrums, depression or somatic symptoms
- Parents are aware of the absence; child often tries to persuade parents to allow him or her to stay home
- Absence of antisocial behaviours such as juvenile delinquency
- During school hours child usually stays home because it is considered a safe and secure environment
- Child expresses willingness to do school work and complies with completing work at home.

Truancy

- Lack of excessive anxiety or fear about going to school
- Child often attempts to conceal absence from parents
- Frequent anti-social behaviour, including delinquent and disruptive acts (e.g. lying, stealing), often in company of antisocial peers
- During school hours, child frequently does not stay home
- Lack of interest in schoolwork and unwillingness to conform to academic and behavioural expectations.
School Strategies

Schools appear to have a greater chance of responding successfully where they:

- have a good system for early detection.
- take a “student centred” approach at the same time as looking at the culture of the school (employing programs such as MindMatters or Kidsmatter can help students feel a sense of belonging and engagement in a school, where they have a sense of safety and support)
- be flexible about attendance and enrolment issues, allowing for options like part-time attendance, graduated return to school, and flexibility in subject choice.
- have an effective process for responding to bullying.
- link with outside agencies to support young people and their families.

After a thorough assessment of the issues, formulate an Attendance Plan:

* Offer gradual re-entry and reintegration.
* Consider reducing the school day for a short, set period before full attendance is expected.
* Use rewards and privileges for attendance.
* Ask the child for a commitment to return today.

It is preferable that the child returns to school as soon as possible.

Parent and Family Approaches

It is vital that parents know the school has previously supported children in this situation, and these children have generally settled well after a short period of adjustment. They must also be assured that the school will follow through on the processes agreed to in the return-to-school plan and that the school is willing to be flexible to assist the child to return to school, as well as addressing the issues that caused school refusal.

When working with parents to implement return to school plans, it is good for parents to know the importance of being consistent in sending their child to school. Help them understand the complexity of school refusal. Teach parents the language to use: for example, not ‘If you go back to school …’ but ‘When you go back to school…’

Let parents know:

- the school has clear structures for empowering students with options such as a staged return to the classroom.
- the child will usually find it progressively easier to come to school each day and their anxiety should gradually decrease.
- the school is comfortable dealing with the child’s distressed behaviours such as psychosomatic symptoms, tantrums, and tearfulness.

Remember: school refusal is a symptom, not a condition— it’s important to get a picture of what the student is experiencing that prevents them from attending school, and address this

Alternatives To School

Especially with older students it may be appropriate to consider the following:

Switching schools may be appropriate where the school in which the young person is enrolled is unable to provide the kind of flexible approach outlined above – however this option should be viewed with caution as many young people have made multiple changes of school with the same pattern repeating at each school.

Alternative Education, such as Links to Learning, is offered by some non-government community organisations and local government authorities. These are appropriate services for students who have left or are at risk of leaving school, so that they can reach their full potential. School of Distance Education can be an appropriate option where the young person is reasonably competent academically, is motivated to continue their education and has good parental support.

Employment or vocational training can be good options for young people who struggle academically and have an interest in other fields. However, depending on the reason they are refusing to go to school, they may still require support to maintain these pathways also.
What to look for:

- 50% or less school attendance month coupled with:
- tearfulness, nervousness
- increase in stomach-aches, dizziness, headaches
- lack of friends, social isolation or withdrawal
- decreased participation in class activities
- difficulty concentrating or remaining on task.

Other recommendations

- Limit the child’s access to the refrigerator, computer games, TV, and other pleasurable activities during school hours.
- Insist that school work is done, that there is no sleeping during the day, and that there are additional chores and jobs to be done to match the additional time at home.
- Suggest the family stick to weekday routines.
- Role play going to school.
- Have the child follow the school routine as closely as possible. If your school has an assessment calendar on its website, use this to help your child plan their study.
- Be sure to set a good example – how you meet your commitments impacts on how they will meet theirs.

Resources and supports

http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/truancy_teenagers.html

How Peers Can Help

Many young people who refuse school are described as being socially isolated, having few or no friends and having negative experiences with peers such as bullying or ostracism. The development of positive peer relations can be a crucial element in assisting young people to return to school. While it is important not to over-burden other young people with responsibility for a young person’s school attendance, peer to peer strategies which can help include:

- having a friend call for the young person on the way to school
- having a friend meet the young person on their arrival to school and accompany them either to class or to the guidance officer’s room
- having a friend phone the student from the guidance office and encourage them to attend, or keep them in touch with events.
Important information for staff assisting students with transition to further education from the NSW Dept Family and Community Services

You may have recently seen news stories about cases of training and vocational colleges targeting vulnerable and young people to sign up to diplomas, in some cases in exchange for a “free” laptop. Often, people are not being made aware that in signing up, they are taking on a large debt for courses that may not ultimately commence or complete, or are courses unlikely to provide them with the qualifications they need for employment in their field of choice.

As of 1 January 2016, the Commonwealth Government has introduced new legislation to better regulate education providers and it is hoped this will see a decrease in these unscrupulous practices. However between now and then, it is likely that dishonest providers may be extra active in attempting to sign up as many people as possible before the new legislation is in place.

In the interim, we are asking that you talk to your clients and/or their carers about the possibility of being approached by training colleges or their marketers in this way, to think what these diplomas would offer in terms of later employment, and the dangers of taking on large debt.

Carers and caseworkers can assist in helping guide young people to credible options such as a local TAFE and Universities and respected and well credited colleges that may offer specialist training.

If any of your clients have been approached by a training college or have already signed up, you can talk to your Child and Family District Unit (CFDU) who will be able to assist, including with information on how to seek waiver of debts. You can also get further information at https://www.education.gov.au/vet-fee-help-reforms

If you or someone you know has been the victim of this scam, please contact the FACS Complaints Line on 1800 000 164.

What is School-Link?
School-Link is a state-wide initiative funded by NSW Health working in partnership with Department of Education and other services. This collaboration aims to improve mental health for children and young people, as well as enhancing partnerships between child and adolescent mental health services and their local schools and TAFE colleges.

What do we do?
We aim to connect education and health staff with:

- Finding the right service for a child, young person and their family
- Consultation on complex cases
- Ideas on supporting mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention
- Accessing training to support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people
- Accessing information on evidence-based practice

We also welcome your suggestions and contributions. If you would like to be on the School-Link database, and receive the quarterly newsletter and be informed of upcoming training and events, email: Nicole.Smith2@sswahs.nsw.gov.au

Include:
- Name
- Job title
- Organisation
- Address
- Phone number
- Email

Get in touch with School-Link:
Nicole Smith/ Kim Eisler
School-Link Coordinators
P: 97369853
Rivendell Child Adolescent and Family Service
Hospital Rd Concord NSW 2138
10th February, 2016

Menai High School Open Night

Dear Parents and students of Year 4, 5 and 6,

Your are invited to attend the Annual Menai High School Open Night on Wednesday 2nd March from 6.00pm to 9.00pm. A Year 6 Parent/Student introduction to Menai High will be held in the school hall from 6.00pm to 6.30pm. At 6.30pm all areas of the school will be open offering displays of students’ work and active demonstrations by students from various years. Maps will be available at all entry points to assist you in finding the displays and refreshments will be available in a number of locations.

Please come along to view and celebrate the outstanding achievements of Menai High School’s students and staff and learn about the excellent opportunities we offer children in our local community.

B ELLEVSEN
Principal

E SAYED-RICH
Deputy Principal