Dear Parents,

In recent weeks we have been looking at ways to lift our children’s resilience. This week, in line with our school value I thought understanding the importance of Optimism would also be of benefit. The attitudes our children develop are so important to how they cope now and in later life.

Viktor Frankl in his book, “Man’s search for meaning” noted the only thing that kept the survivors alive in the concentration camps was their attitudes.

Maybe we should ask ourselves are we glass half full parents or glass half empty parents?

Helping a child to look on the bright side is a significant life skill to develop.

Optimists look at the flip side of negative events for some good, some hope and some reason to be positive. It means having a strong self-belief and confidence to deal with challenging situations. Optimists do better academically, socially and enjoy better health than pessimists. Helping a child to look on the bright side is a significant life skill to develop. When children think they can succeed they are more likely to give things a try. In other words, if they think THEY CAN, THEY WILL.

According to the General Parenting tip sheet on this topic published by the Queensland Government there are five building blocks of optimism:

1. Having a go
2. Practicing
3. Coming to terms with success and failure
4. Planning for the future
5. Having the belief and confidence to try again

Importantly, these building blocks link optimism with competence so when children experience success they are more likely to believe that they can achieve and have more success.

Some children are natural optimists. They are born with optimistic temperaments and have natural dispositions to deal with challenges and problems. Others expect the worst and tend to see catastrophes where really small challenges exist.

Recent American research indicates that children learn their optimism from their experiences of success and through their interactions with parents, teachers and significant others in the first eight years of life.

So the way adults talk is significant in the way they shape a child’s belief about success or failure. The message is clear that adults need to be aware how they present the world to children as our explanatory style (the way we explain events) is on show.

Optimists explain adverse events in the following ways:

1. Adverse events tend to be temporary rather than permanent: “It takes time to find a friend” rather than “No one likes me.”
2. Situations or causes are specific rather than general: “I am not so good at soccer” rather than “I am hopeless at sport.”
3. Blame is rationalised rather than personalised: “I was grounded because I hurt my sister” rather than “I was grounded because I am a bad kid.”

Pessimists have a tendency to build mountains out of molehills and give up before trying. The trouble with pessimism is that it tends to be a self-fulfilling prophecy. “I told you I wouldn’t get a kick in the game. What was the point of me even turning up?” is a typical pessimist’s approach. Such comments just reinforce pessimism and these feelings of hopelessness lead to helplessness.

To promote optimism in the children around you try the following four strategies:

1. Model positive thinking and optimism. Let children hear your positive self-talk.
2. Challenge children’s negative or unrealistic appraisals. For instance, “Everyone hates me. I have no friends” can be challenged with “Sometimes it feels like we have no friends but you spent all morning with Melanie yesterday.”
3. Teach children to positively track. They can look for the good things that happen in life, no matter how small and say them to themselves or out loud.
4. Teach children to positively reframe. When something unpleasant happens or failure occurs they can actively look on the bright side. E.g. “I pranged my bike but at least I came out unhurt” or “That activity didn’t work but I know what to do next time.”

The beauty about developing optimism is that it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, which makes it such a powerful success strategy.

Keep smiling

Cathy Blackford
Principal

News from the Principal

Monday, 24th June : School Closure Staff PD
Friday, 28th June: School Closure
Parent/Teacher Meeting
School Crossings

Concern has been expressed to the school that an increasing number of parents and children are not using the School Crossing in Breed Street or Kay Street. When flags are displayed all pedestrians should use the crossing. If you are crossing the road in Church or Seymour Streets with children please use the intersection crossing/pedestrian refuge.  Children are reminded to always follow the instructions of the crossing supervisor. They must not step onto the crossing/road until the supervisor blows the whistle. Recently there have been a few incidents of drivers travelling through the crossing whilst the supervisor is on the road. The police are aware of this and have been watching the crossings.

Wellbeing News

VALUES PROGRAM

This week we commence our focus on the value of ‘Joy and Optimism’. Martin Seligman suggests that, “The basis of optimism does not lie in positive phrases or images of victory, but in the way you think about causes”. In our classrooms, the children will be learning skills that promote positive habits of mind that support an optimistic approach to life and in turn enhance their full academic, social, emotional and behavioural potential.

JUNE

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<td>9th Thu</td>
<td>Giving Mass – Gr 3/4A&amp;B – 9.30a.m</td>
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<td>16th Thu</td>
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<td>19th Thu</td>
<td>Learning Assembly – Gr 5/6 – 2.30p.m</td>
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<td>22nd Thu</td>
<td>Learning Assembly, Confirmation Parent Meet.</td>
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<td>25th Thu</td>
<td>Grade 3/4 Camp</td>
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<td>Grade 3/4 return from Camp</td>
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<td>25th Fri</td>
<td>Mass – Gr 5/6A&amp;C – 9.30a.m</td>
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<td>Learning Assembly – Gr 1/2 – 2.30p.m</td>
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<td>25th Fri</td>
<td>Transaction of Confirmation – Commit. Mass</td>
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<td>26th Wed</td>
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St Vincent de Paul Society good News

Friday, 14th June 2013

St Michael’s School Giving Mass 9.30am

Traditionally our whole school comes together for the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to reflect on people in our community, whether it be local or overseas, who are less fortunate than ourselves.

Again, we are supporting St Vinnies. Over next couple of weeks each classroom will be collecting donations of non-perishable grocery items to present to St Vinnies at the Giving Mass.

St Michael’s School – Parents & Friends Group monthly meeting is on this Thursday, 13th June at 9.00am in the Staffroom. All welcome to attend.

Education in Faith News

St Michael’s Parish - Sacrament of Confirmation 2013

A meeting for all Parents of Catholic children in Year 6, who would like their child to celebrate their Confirmation this year, will be held on: Date: Wednesday 19th June 2013 Venue: St Michael’s School Hall Time: 7pm, please arrive 10min prior to meeting to allow time for signing in.

A parent or representative from each family must attend this meeting.

Important details to note:

- All children wanting to celebrate Confirmation or Eucharist in 2013 should already be enrolled. Please contact this office if your child is not enrolled.
- If you have changed residential address or email address since enrolling last year please contact this office.
- Confirmation Celebration Preference Forms will be mailed to all enrolled families in the next couple of weeks.
- If your child did not celebrate Eucharist at St Michael’s Parish, you must provide a copy of your child’s Reconciliation and Eucharist Certificates.

Confirmation (Grade 6) – Saturday 17th August 6pm and Sunday 18th August 9.30am

For further information, please phone 51747703 Office hours: Tue & Wed between 9.30am & 1pm during school terms.

Sports News

Congratulations to the following students who competed in the Division Cross Country last Thursday: Liam Willaton, Flynn Shields, Lori Scholtes, Georgia Hughes, Madi Rohde, Jade Melbourne, Hugh Dunbar and Finn Rohde. They have all progressed to the Gippsland Region Cross Country competition on 20th June 2013.
Mathematical Problem

It would be great if you as parents could work the problem with your child or against your child and then compare your results. Have fun thinking mathematically.

Solution for Mathematical Problem in Newsletter No. 16

Replace the stars with digits so the problem is correct.

Using twenty cubes, make four piles so that the first pile contains four more cubes than the second pile; the second pile contains one cube less that the third pile; and the fourth pile contains twice as many cubes as the second pile.

"READ, READ, READ, FOR THE MORE YOU READ, THE MORE YOU KNOW, THE MORE YOU KNOW, THE MORE YOU GROW, SO READ, READ, READ"

Reading is a complex process beginning from the role play reader to the advanced reader with a few stages in between. So this week, we will focus on independent readers; those who read for a variety of purposes (humour, entertainment, information) and display reading confidence. They use appropriate expression when reading aloud, read more difficult material and seldom make mistakes.

**How I Can Help my child with reading?**

- Encourage your child to talk about books he or she has enjoyed or disliked. Foster thoughtful criticism and comment.
- Support the learning process by guiding and advising; this does not mean doing the work for your child. Talking things through is very important.
- Let your child see that you sometimes need to discuss and clarify issues to help your understanding.
- Continue to discuss ideas, statements and underlying beliefs which are evident in newspapers, books and television shows.