



GOROKAN PUBLIC SCHOOL

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Wednesday 29th May 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

At Gorokan Public School we believe that supporting families in our school community helps to enhance the early learning and wellbeing of children before they start school, as they transition to school and once they have commenced school. There are 45 Schools as Community Centres (SaCC) projects across the state and we are most fortunate to have this facility at our school.

SaCC projects are hosted by NSW Public Schools such as ours and led by a local facilitator who coordinates and manages a range of community engagement initiatives and programs supporting families with young children. Our highly knowledgeable and welcoming facilitator is Liz McMinn. Families are encouraged to participate in SaCC activities, including:

- supported playgroups
- early literacy activities
- transition to school strategies
- parenting programs
- adult learning and
- health and nutrition initiatives.

The following programs were launched last week:

- The **Early Birds** playgroup for 4 to 6 year olds, specifically targeting preschool children who will be starting school in 2020. The group meets on Wednesday mornings from 9:15 to 11:15 am.
- **Little Murguwans** Aboriginal supported playgroup for pre-schoolers is held every Tuesday from 9:30 to 11:30 am.
- **Dads and Kids Playtime** is held every Tuesday afternoon from 12:45 to 2:45pm each week.

For further information, please call Liz on 0467 760 712 or email her at liz.mcminn@det.nsw.edu.au.

National Reconciliation Week - This week the students will be engaged in activities that focus on, and promote national reconciliation. We will celebrate and build on the respectful relationships

shared by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians. At Gorokan Public School, we are committed to this process and work in partnership with our Aboriginal community and the Muru Bulbi Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) to build cultural capacity within all students (20 per cent of which are Aboriginal). This year's theme *Grounded in Truth Walk Together with Courage* will be explored with students at an age appropriate level, as a mark of respect and to raise awareness of this significant Australian historical event in order to promote and support the long-term reconciliation process.

Gorokan High 5 - The Gorokan High 5 is an explicitly taught strategy, which aims to provide students with problem solving strategies for minor playground and classroom incidents. This approach has been reinforced across the school and has proven to be highly successful. Reinforcement of these strategies at home will further assist the students.

Students are encouraged to stay calm and...

1. *Ignore*
2. *Walk away*
3. *Say "Stop it I don't like it!"*
4. *Say "We don't do that at our school" and if the problem persists,*
5. *Tell a teacher.*

School Chaplain - School chaplains assist students by promoting student wellbeing, working as part of the school support team to assist students who are suffering from bereavement, family breakdown or other crisis and loss situations. They are also proactive in providing students with programs to enhance their school and life experiences. Our school chaplains are Sophie Carver and newly appointed Brad Nelson.

Together we can make a difference.

Jesmond Zammit

Principal

Dates to Remember

Monday 3 rd June	Young Leaders Conference - Gosford Leagues Club
Tuesday 4 th June	Year 6 Social Skills Program - Camp Toukley
Friday 5 th July	Athletics Carnival Years 2 - 6 - Mingara
Wednesday 31 st July	Year 3 - Girrakool & Bulgandry Excursion
Thursday 1 st August	Year 4 - Girrakool & Bulgandry Excursion
Monday 26 th - Wednesday 28 th August	Year 5 - Bathurst Excursion
Tuesday 3 rd - Thursday 5 th September	Year 6 - Canberra Excursion

Early Stage 1 Supervisor – Mrs D

Class Awards - Congratulations to the following students for receiving class awards last week.
KC - Athena-Olina, Zachery **KD/T** – Mia, Lachlan **KJ** – Jasmine, Beau **KL** – Lucas, Harrison **KF/L** – Sienna, William.

Home Readers - Please sign the Term 2 reading card nightly but keep the books for one week before returning them to school to swap. Please return the folder each Friday to swap books for the following week.

Belongings - Please clearly label all of your child's belongings, including lunch boxes, drink bottles, clothing items and shoes. This promotes a quicker return of items.

Attendance - Please send absentee notes with your child when they return to school. Alternatively you can phone the office.

Winter Colds - Please remind your child to wash their hands regularly when sick, use tissues and cover their nose and mouth when sneezing to reduce the spread of germs.

Stage 1 Supervisor - Miss L Anderson

Excursion - Year One and Year Two students loved their excursion to see Billionaire Boy at the Art House, Wyong. They thoroughly enjoyed the musical and their behaviour was outstanding. All students

are to be congratulated on their safe, respectful choices while representing our school.

Playground Activities - Students are enjoying the teacher run activities at recess and lunch which are encouraging new skill development and positive socialisation. It is wonderful to see such high engagement in these activities. While there are some activities under the COLA, some are in the sun and require a hat. Please remind your child to bring their school hat so they don't miss out on these wonderful activities.

Behaviour Cards - Congratulations to the students who are receiving 4, 5 and 6's on their behaviour cards each week. We are very proud of your efforts and hope you enjoy your rewards day.

Stage 2 Supervisor - Mrs R Ranse

Year 3 - Year 4 Girrakool and Bulgandry Excursion - Thank you to those parents who have paid for the Stage 2 excursion to Bulgandry and Girrakool. There is still plenty of time left to pay if you still want your child to attend.

School Uniform - With the cooler weather now well and truly here, it is important that students have a school jumper. Please make sure that jumpers are labelled with your child's name and class as this makes it easier to return if it becomes misplaced.

Stage 3 Supervisor - Mrs G Farrell

School Uniform - We would like all Stage 3 students to be part of the Gorokan team and wear the correct school uniform. The Year 6 shirts are in the process of being designed and made. We can't wait for them to be printed and see our students wearing them later this term.

Year 6 Canberra Excursion - 3rd September to 5th September - Medical notes have been sent home to all students who will be attending the Canberra excursion. Please keep making payments on this excursion. A minimum payment of \$250 is due by 12th June, which is only two weeks away and the final payment is due by 4th July.

Year 5 Bathurst Excursion - 26th August - 28th August - If you still wish for your child to attend, please pay the deposit and return the permission note as soon as possible. A minimum payment of \$250 is due by 12th June and the final payment totalling \$380 is due by 4th July.

School Leadership Team - Our school student leadership team will be attending a Young Leaders Conference on Monday 3rd June at Gosford Leagues Club.

Gorokan High School Sports Day - Year 5 will be given the opportunity to participate in a sports day run by Gorokan High School as part of the Physical Sporting Challenge Program. This will be held in the coming weeks. Notes will be sent home soon.

Special Education - Mrs S Crook

Visual Aids for Learning - When we talk about visuals at school, we are talking about real objects, parts of objects, photographs of the actual object, photographs of similar objects, drawings, computer generated symbols and written words. They can be used in a variety of ways including to:

- let children know exactly what is expected of them
- teach new skills
- support class routines
- increase and support expressive and receptive language
- help children to retain information
- remind children of a verbal direction.



We use visuals at school for a variety of different reasons. They support the learning of our students because they remain present long after the words are spoken or the gesture or sign made. Visuals can help children understand spoken language and can give them the cues or reminders they need when speaking themselves.

Visuals can be used at home to support your child to develop new routines and skills. Why not have a go yourself? Maybe you could use them to develop some self-care or living skills for your child at home. Our staff are here to support you to set up some visuals for your child at home.

Gymnastics - The children are really enjoying going to gymnastics each week. They are really improving in their listening skills and also their core strength and gross motor skills. Please remember to send in \$7 each week to pay for this worthwhile experience.



Sport News

Goalball - On Monday 27th May a group of Year 5 students represented our school at Niagara Park Stadium. Liam C, Luke W, Jesse V, Lyana C, Brianna C and Daniel M made our school proud. They were well behaved and were great sports! The first competition game our school has ever played was amazing to watch for their coach Mr Ward, and the parents who attended. We were all so excited to have won our first game as we were so inexperienced when compared to the other teams who had been involved in the game for years. The second game was a loss but everyone had fun and loved the experience.

Goalball is played with three team members at a time on the court. The players must have blindfolds on and are not allowed to touch the blindfolds. It is played with a ball that has bells in it which allows you to hear where the ball is heading. We play Goalball in the hall on Wednesday's at lunch time.



Netball - Our school Stage 3 teams will be competing in the NSW Netball Gala Day on Tuesday 4th June at Adcock Park, West Gosford.

School Athletics Carnival - Our athletics carnival will be held for all students in Years 2 - 6 on Friday 5th July at Mingara Athletics Centre. Notes will go out in the near future.

School News

School Fundraising - We are raising money for our school and are thrilled to be launching the NEW 2019/2020 Entertainment Memberships! The book or app costs \$65 with 20% of every membership sold going to the school. There are great deals which include 2-for-1, special rates and up to 50% off activities, dining, shopping, travel and leisure. There is a 2018/19 book in the office for you to look at as an example. It does not take you long to save the \$65 you spend. Anytime you use it, the savings are dollars in your pocket! Please help us achieve our goal by purchasing an Entertainment Membership online at <http://www.entbook.com.au/345h40> or contact the office for a form to complete.

6 tips for parenting anxious kids

by Dr Jodi Richardson

If you're the parent of an anxious child you're most certainly not alone. The number of children experiencing an anxiety disorder is currently estimated at 117 million worldwide. Here in Australia, there's an average of 2 anxious kids in every classroom; and they're the ones with a diagnosis. Many more anxious kids are yet to have their anxiety identified and understood.

As much as we'd like to, we can't rid our kids of their anxiety, but we can help them to manage it in ways that enable them move it from centre stage and get on with living a vibrant, rich and meaningful life.

Here are 6 tips to support you to parent your anxious child:

1. Explain anxiety

Anxious kids can struggle to explain how they feel and can worry that no-one will understand what they're going through. That's why explaining anxiety is an important step in supporting an anxious child. The knowledge that anxiety is well understood, that other kids experience it and that it's manageable brings them immediate relief.

Teach your anxious child that the part of their brain that protects them from danger is always on high alert. Called the amygdala, it's meant to protect them from genuine danger but for anxious kids, it can be almost constantly activated.

Explain that when they feel anxious, their amygdala sends signals to their body to fight or flee from the threat, whether it's real or imagined.

Next, talk about the body changes such as increased heart rate, rapid breathing and an upset stomach that power them up to fight or flee. They might even feel dizzy, hot, sweaty and panicked. Anxiety affects thinking and behaviour too.

2. Respond with empathy

In the midst of an anxious moment it's natural to want to reassure anxious kids they've got nothing to worry about. Reassurance works in the short term but it soon wears off and they come back for more, which becomes an unhelpful pattern.

Instead, respond with empathy and validation. Use ahhh statements such as:

- "Ahhh, I see you're feeling really anxious right now, I know how hard this is for you"
- "Ahhh, I know you're feeling really worried right now, it's not much fun feeling like that is it?"

Anxious kids need to know you understand what they're going through.

3. Show the amygdala they're safe

Once the amygdala senses danger, the cascade of events that follow can't be stopped. The body and brain will respond as if the danger is immediate. The best way to help an anxious child calm their anxious brain is to teach them to *show* their amygdala they're safe. Deep and intentional breathing helps an anxious child to calm their amygdala and will begin to reduce their anxious symptoms. Practise intentional breathing regularly between anxious times before applying this technique in the midst of an anxious moment.

4. Practise mindfulness -the antidote to worrying

Anxiety is distress now about a possible future event, which is why worrying is common for anxious kids. When an anxious child's mind fast-forwards to an upcoming event or expectation, their amygdala can respond as if the 'threat' to their safety is immediate. The antidote to worrying is mindfulness. Put simply, mindfulness is paying attention to what's happening in the present moment. It may take time to learn, but is a powerful anxiety management strategy once it's mastered.

5. Practice defusing sticky thoughts

Anxious thoughts can get stuck, refusing to budge no matter how much attention is paid to them. Defusion is a strategy that helps anxious kids look at their thoughts rather than from them.

Imagine your anxious child is worried about an upcoming test. They're thinking "I'm going to fail the test". The thought makes them feel awful. Defusion helps kids (all of us) to look at *their* thoughts by reminding them that the words in their heads are indeed just words, not reality.

Your anxious child can defuse his unhelpful thoughts by putting a statement in front of the thought such as: "I notice I'm having the thought that I'm going to fail the test." Alternatively, he can say the thought in a character voice like Darth Vader or Peppa Pig, or sing it to the tune of happy birthday or a nursery rhyme. Defusion puts distance between anxious kids and their thoughts and is a wonderful skill to learn.

6. Get the fundamentals right

Ample sleep, good nutrition and exercise are essential for anxious kids. Support your child to adhere to their optimal bedtime so they wake naturally around the time of their alarm, reduce their sugar intake to support their gut health and to exercise regularly for optimal mental health.

These are some of the many strategies that you can share with your child to support them to recognise and manage their anxiety so they can live life in full colour.