



The Woody Point of View

7th February, 2013

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK



Dear Parents/Caregivers Welcome Back

The school year is well and truly underway for all our school's students. Welcome back to all our students' families and friends. We hope you all had a safe and relaxing holiday season.

The "Woody Point of View" newsletter goes to school and full-time Prep families on a fortnightly basis and includes news, class stories and photos.

A very special welcome goes to the families of our 22 new students in the school and 18 alternate Prep students. Most of the students have settled into their new classrooms and teachers are working on establishing routines. Congratulations to all teachers, teacher aides and parents for a smooth start to the year. I've been able to visit all of the classrooms and it has been lovely to see children engaged in so much fun and active learning.

Welcome back to all our regular staff. We have a number of changes for 2013. Welcome to our new staff. We hope you enjoy joining the "Woody Point Family".

Special thanks go to the many parents who have completed and returned information and forms for 2013. If you have any forms that are not yet completed, please complete them and return to your child's teacher as soon as possible so we can ensure all of our records are up-to-date.

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DATES TO REMEMBER

P & C Positions held for 2012

President: Lydia Simmons
Vice President: Naomi Macquarie
Secretary: Sandra Turner
Treasurer: Sharon Booyen

The next meeting of the P & C will be 18th February, 2013 — ALL WELCOME!

Term 1

Last Day Term 1 – Thursday 28th March, 2013
Good Friday – 29th March, 2013
Easter Monday – 1st April, 2013
School Holidays – 2nd April, 2013 until 12th April, 2013.

Term 2

First Day Term 2 – Monday 15th April, 2013

Toy Library – Date to be advised

Di from the Toy Library visits the school approximately every month for Toy borrowing. This is a free service to students from Woody Point Special School.

School Assembly – 2.15pm Undercover Area

Friday 15th February, 2013
Friday 8th March, 2013

WOODY POINT STATE SPECIAL SCHOOL

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From the Principal's Desk *continued*

Staff Changes

- Welcome to all our volunteers and to Pim, Brott and Anke who are tertiary students who are volunteering here from Holland. They will be assisting with Physical Education and motor programs.
- Welcome to new teachers, Stephanie and Kerryn who are working in school classes. We also welcome Carol and Madonna who have moved to the school from ECDP.
- We also welcome Kim Kelly who has taken over the HOSES position at ECDP. Kim has transferred from the Bundaberg area.
- Welcome back to Kate and Leesa who are Prep teachers.

Signing In and Out

Parents are always welcome at our school. Can parents who are coming to spend time in classrooms please come through the reception and sign in and out on the book on the counter.

If parents are delivering or collecting their children outside the usual start/finish times (e.g. for a Doctor's visit), please sign them out at the school reception. We are required to show on our rolls if students are late/early. Thank you.

School Hours

Our official school hours are 8.50am to 2.50pm. and 9.00-2.30 for ECDP Prep. If you are bringing your child to school, please try to be as close to these times as possible. If you arrive a little earlier in the mornings, students can go to morning duty between hall and pool from 8.30am.

P & C Meetings

Our school has Parents and Citizen's Association Meetings on the third Monday of the month. First meeting for the year is 18th February. All families are welcome.

**Jan Baidon
Principal**



From the Deputy Principal

We have had a wonderful start to the year and we welcome all new students and families to Woody Point Special School.

COMMUNICATION

Communication with and from parents is an integral part of the education of your child. The teachers at Woody Point use various means of communicating with parents and carers – face to face conversations, Communication Books, email and telephone calls to name a few. All are important ways of communicating your child's progress and each has a suitable time and a place to occur.

The start of the day at Woody Point is a busy time with many organisational activities and curriculum learning taking place, so at times it is not possible for the class teacher to have a catch up with you at that point in time. It may be, if it is important and requires time to sit and discuss, that a suitable time outside of class time is set aside to have this valuable conversation.

Likewise with telephone calls it may not always be possible to put calls through to the teacher due to the programs they may be running, playground duty or curriculum planning. As much focused learning takes place in the mornings when students are fresh, it is asked if we could keep the time between 9:00am and 10:30am free from interruptions. Your assistance in helping us maintain this focused teaching time is much appreciated.

LUNCHES

Lunches and snacks play a big part in supplying your child with their daily nutritional needs. Good nutrition can help children to:

- build healthy bodies and minds
- stay alert in class and be energetic all day
- maintain a healthy weight
- fight infections.

Breakfast is also essential for children. Children have periods of fast growth and are generally very active. This means their nutritional needs are high. However, children don't always know what food is best for them – they need to be guided. Queensland children are generally healthy, but most eat too many unhealthy 'extra' foods like chips, lollies and soft drink. Include important foods like fruit, vegetables and dairy products in lunch boxes. If children don't eat these foods at school, it can be difficult to offer enough at other meal times. Eating habits are generally formed in early childhood, so give your child the best start by packing a healthy lunch box. Being a good role model yourself will also send a powerful message to your children.

PARENTS & CITIZENS ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

P&C meetings are held on the third Monday of each month in term time at 9.30am.

Our meetings are usually held in the staff room and commence with a cuppa and refreshments. All parents and friends are welcome to attend and discuss school issues with staff. The meeting day and time is set at the Annual General Meeting held in March each year. At this meeting Officer Bearers are elected and the audited annual financial statement is presented.

SCHOOL TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE SCHEME

Contact person: Educational Program Officer, Woody Point Special School.

Transport Assessors: Principal, Deputy Principal, Head of Special Education Services

School Transport Assistance is only available to students whose families meet the eligibility criteria and who are attending the nearest appropriately coded facility or District approved program.

Using Contract Transport

Parents who use contract transport i.e. taxis, minibuses and modified vehicles should:



The Newsletter of the Woody Point State Special School.

- Have student ready at agreed time in the morning
- Be home to receive student in the afternoon
- Advise school of any changes in pick up or drop off addresses well in advance of the change as this must be organised by the school and approved by District Office.
- Changes to destination are not to be arranged with bus drivers - all changes must be made through the school.
- Phone the driver/company in case of illness or non-attendance on a particular day.
- Advise the school of any changes to respite dates as soon as possible; otherwise child may not receive transport, as these changes need to be pre-booked.
- Discuss with the driver what assistance is needed to load and unload the vehicle. Drivers are able to assist.
- Inform the driver of health issues.

Drivers of buses will supply parents with contact phone numbers so they can be advised if a child is not travelling, e.g. too ill to attend school.

**Sheldon Hooper
Deputy Principal**



InsideOutside Theatre Company

Feature article

December 3 2012

New inclusive theatre venture in Redcliffe

InsideOutside Theatre Company has recently received a grant from the Regional Arts Development Fund to launch new inclusive theatre workshops at the Bird's Nest Theatre, Redcliffe State High School. The *SameSkin* project will offer Saturday workshops in acting, dance and physical theatre to people from 11 to adult with or without disabilities starting in January 2013.

Artistic Director, Angela Witcher, who has 30 years experience as a performer, director and writer in the UK, said, "We are offering a high-quality theatre education experience for people in the Moreton Bay region including those with mixed abilities and special needs, to encourage friendships, teamwork, personal development, and allow participants to experience the pleasure of creativity. Participants will be aged from 11 to adult, with and without disabilities, and we will aim to improve functional literacy, self-confidence, interpersonal skills, and encourage collaboration and self-advocacy for our participants."

Joining Angela in this venture is dancer and choreographer Zalmon Vilmanis, who has worked professionally in Europe and Australia for 20 years and currently collaborates with the Queensland Dance School of Excellence and tutors at QUT and Expressions Dance Company.

Classes will be split across four 8-week terms during 2013 with a 'Showing' of work for family and friends at the end of each term. Classes will be in 3 groups by age range

Each class is limited to 30 students (in two groups of 15) and places can be booked by calling Angela on 0415 070 015 or visiting www.insideoutsidetheatre.com.

The Regional Arts Development Fund is a Queensland Government initiative through Arts Queensland and Moreton Bay Regional Council to support local arts and culture.



The Woody Point School Community values learning, active partnerships and individuality.



MyTime Parent Support Group

Funding & Allowances

Wednesday 13th February

9am til noon

Woody Point School Hall

MyTime is your group!

It's a great chance to make good friends, have fun and learn new things with parents/ carers who are in similar circumstances.

Sandra Kennedy, our EPO, will join us to share the latest news on various funding and allowance options.

Morning Tea and Child Care supplied

Free goods available!

- Battery operated toddler quad bikes.
- Nappy liners & pull ups size small- medium (hip 70- 120 cm) available. Good brands.
- WPSS royal blue school shorts size 6.

Do you have the following items to donate?

- Sofa bed or lounge suite
- Dining table and chairs
- Chest of Drawers

Sharon Booyen ph 3480 4333 or sbooy1@eq.edu.au



INSIGHTS

by Michael Grose - No. 1 parenting educator



10 ways to promote good mental health & wellbeing in kids

This year make mental health a parenting priority. Kids with good mental health feel better, learn better and are better equipped to handle life's curve balls.

It seems strange to talk about promoting good mental health in children.

Shouldn't all children naturally have good mental health habits? After all, childhood is supposed to be a pretty relaxed time of life, free from the pressures and stresses that come hand in hand with adulthood.

Sadly, it doesn't seem that way. According to the Australian Psychological Society one in seven Australian children experience some type of mental health issue, with ADHD, anxiety and depression being the most common.

Having good mental health doesn't mean kids don't experience difficulties or worries. Feeling worried, sad or fearful is normal. Kids who are mentally healthy are equipped to handle many of life's curve balls that come their way. They also don't let their emotions overwhelm them. As a result they learn better and have more friends as well.

As a parent it's useful to reflect on the mental health habits that you promote in your kids. Here are ten ways to promote good mental health and wellbeing in kids.

1. Model good mental health habits: If you, like many parents, live constantly with stress then consider ways to actively minimise it, such as getting regular exercise, plenty of sleep and doing relaxation exercises. Not only will this improve your mental health, and make you easier to live with, it will send a strong positive message that mental health is important. It's worth remembering that kids learn what they live, so make sure they see good mental health habits first hand.

2. Make sure they get enough sleep: Sleep is the one of the building blocks of mental health and wellbeing. Many children and just about all teenagers are sleep-deprived at the moment. Many parents are sleep-deprived as well! Children need between 10 and 12 hours' sleep to enable proper growth and development, while teenagers need a minimum of nine hours. One of the single most powerful strategies to improve kids' abilities to cope with stressful or changing situations is to ensure they get enough sleep.

3. Encourage your kids to exercise: When my mum would tell me all those years ago to turn the television off and go outside and play, she didn't know she was promoting good mental health. She just knew that physical activity was a good thing for an active growing boy. Kids today get less



exercise than those of past generations, which is an impediment to mental health. Exercise stimulates the chemicals that improve mood and release the stress that builds up over a day. An hour's movement per day seems the minimum for kids. How much exercise does your child receive?

4. Encourage creative outlets: Kids should practise creativity if for no other reason than it helps them experience the state of 'flow'. This is the state of getting so immersed in an activity that you forget about time and place. Writers and other creatives understand the concept of flow. It's energizing and helps take stressed and worried kids out of themselves.

5. Provide a space of their own: Children of all ages benefit from having some space of their own where they can think. Quiet time and down time give boys the chance to let their thoughts wander around inside their heads. It also helps them get to know, and even like, themselves. Boys will often do their best thinking on their own, so they tend to retreat to their caves (bedroom) when things go wrong at school or in their relationships. They need to go within to find their own answer.

6. Talk about their troubles: A problem shared is a problem halved. Talking about what's worrying you is a great way to remove the burden of worry and reduce anxiousness. Some kids bottle up what's inside, while others will catastrophise a situation, which can make matters seem worse. If your child has a problem let him know that his

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concerns are important to you. Kids often can't tell you what may be wrong, so be observant and gently ask questions to help gain a clearer picture of how kids may be feeling.

7. Help them relax: Make sure your child has a hobby or activity that relaxes them. The ability to relax and get away from the stresses of everyday life is essential. Some children who have real difficulty switching off may benefit from practising meditation or mindfulness, but most kids just need time to chill out so they can relax naturally. (I personally practise mindfulness and have found it a really helpful way to turn off my brain for a while!)

8. Have two routines – weekday and weekend: Most households are pretty highly scheduled these days. There are routines for getting up, coming home, eating meals and going to bed. These structures are necessary when we're busy. Families need a second, more relaxed weekend routine that helps kids relax and unwind. It's important to have this release valve if families are flat out busy during the week.

9. Foster volunteering and helpfulness: Social isolation is a huge predictor of poor mental health. Encourage your child to be connected to and help others in any way possible. Helping others reinforces social connectedness and the importance of being part of a community, as well as providing opportunities for positive recognition.

10. Bring fun and playfulness into their lives: Kids should be the kings and queens of play; however, some children live such full-on, organised lives that much of the natural fun and spontaneity has been stripped from their everyday life. Mucking around, which is code for having fun, is something many children of this generation don't have time for. If you

see your child constantly stressed or overwhelmed by events, change the mood by going to a movie, joining them in a game or seeking other ways to have some fun.

These ideas are basic common sense. However, as kids' lives get busier these essentials get squeezed out. Here's my recommendation to ensure that mental health habits aren't overlooked or neglected.

First, see these habits as the building blocks of mental health. Don't ignore or trivialise them. Talk to your children and tie these activities to their mental health. Do this in your own way and your own time.

Second, assess which of these habits need your attention and make some adjustments over time to push the pendulum back in favour of your child's mental health.

FREE Michael Grose parenting resources to help you promote good mental health in your kids.

- ✓ **Coping ebook:** 12 essential coping strategies every child can use when life gets hard
- ✓ **Poster:** 10 ways to promote good mental health & well-being in kids
- ✓ **Poster:** 25 Great Parenting Ideas (to stick to your fridge)

These great resources are waiting for you at parentingideas.com.au/ParentingIdeas-Newsletter. They're available for a short time only, so be quick!

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INSIGHTS

by Michael Grose - No. 1 parenting educator



Help kids face their fears

Navigating fear is part of growing up. It's important to remember that fear decreases (and sometimes disappears) with positive experiences.



All kids experience fear at some stage.

Many fears are normal and developmental, such as fear of separation, fear of the dark and fear of new situations.

Other fears – such as fear of the dentist, fear of new social situations and fear of dogs – are more individual. They are often learned, or occur due to a bad experience.

Author Gisela Preuschoff, in her book *Raising Girls*, describes a recent longitudinal study that showed how girls are more fearful than boys. The physical signs of fear, including increased heart rate and enlarged pupils, are greater in girls than boys. As androgens (male hormones) have a calming effect, boys show less fear.

Jerome Kagan, Professor of Psychology at Harvard University, believes that excessive fear in girls is related to overprotective but well-intentioned caring they receive from parents and carers.

It's been noted that many parents allow boys to take more physical risks than girls, and have different views of danger for each gender.

Fear is okay

Navigating fear is part of growing up. Fear plays an important role. It makes us cautious and causes us to prepare for a new or risky situation. The preparation may be physical ("I'll walk on the other side of the street to avoid that mean dog.") or psychological ("I'll be brave when I visit the dentist!")

Sometimes normal, healthy fears are confused with anxiety. Fear is unhealthy if it overwhelms kids, dominating their thinking and behaviour, or if it paralyses and prevents them from participating in everyday life. Fear is normal if it makes them wary but is not overwhelming.

Fears need to be faced

It's important to remember that fear decreases (and sometimes disappears) with positive experiences. Walk past a scary dog without being bitten often enough and you'll learn that it's not so scary after all! Give enough talks at school and kids will wonder what all the fuss was about.

Scaffolding is one way to help kids beat their fears. That is, if they are fearful of going into a new situation on their own, go with them for a short time, then find an excuse to leave once they have settled. Alternatively, leave them to spend just a short time in an unknown situation at first. Increase the time as kids get used to the situation. Scaffolding beats avoidance and helps overcome fear.

Validate your child's fears but let them know you have faith that they will be able to face them. Point out that they have conquered fear before – when they rode a bike for the first time, gave a talk, slept on their own with the light off for the first time – and they can do so again.

Other ways to help kids be brave and reduce their fears:

1. Increase their physical skills. Increased physical confidence comes when children explore and learn to control their bodies. Gymnastics and martial arts are two activities that give boys and girls greater physical confidence.

2. Teach them how... Parents protect kids best by teaching them how to navigate new situations rather than by preventing participation. Teach kids how to hold a knife, how to walk home from the park safely on their own, and how to climb a tree and get down again.

3. Teach kids simple relaxation techniques. Babies learn to self-soothe by sucking their fingers. Older children use other relaxation methods ranging from deep breathing, singing and self-distraction by, say, reading a book or listening to a story.

4. Show confidence and hope. Kids often take their cues from their parents, so if you want your child to be brave then you need to be brave too. I'm not suggesting you be dismissive of real fears, but your confidence and reassurance can really help when kids have to face their fears.

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