



Friday, 12 November,
Newsletter No: 7



INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER



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FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK



Dear Parents/Carers,

We started this term off with our weekly Edu-Dance sessions. The students have been working hard on their dance moves and we look forward to seeing the final performances on Celebration Night on Monday 13 December.

This year our students were victorious in winning the Outright Champions Shield, Meritorious Shield and placing second in the Team Games Shield. Congratulations to our students and staff for giving up lunch time breaks to train, the training certainly paid off. A special thank you Mrs McCarthy, Mr Tisdale, Mrs Simon and Mr Ellis for leading our students on the day.

The school conducted the National School Opinion Survey last term. The school had significantly more respondents this time with a total of 149 compared to 80 in 2018. We appreciate the feedback and acknowledge more parents are willing to participate. The increase in respondents was due to the assistance of the School Board representatives asking parents to complete the survey and greater communication about the importance of all parents completing the survey. Overall, the parent community are very satisfied with the school, however, there are a couple of areas we will focus on in the future.

The 'Sculpture Walk' in Week 3 was very inspiring to see. I was impressed with the level of artistic flare the students had demonstrated through their Art lessons in class, but I was equally excited to see entries from our families, community members and the students and staff form the LDC. A special thank you to Mrs Shana Perna for coordinating such a successful event for the whole school community to enjoy.

On Wednesday we celebrated *Multicultural Day* with students learning about various cultures from around the world. The students came dressed in traditional costumes and they brought in a plate of food to share. The feast displayed in every block was outstanding. I enjoyed learning about the different foods and most importantly found joy in seeing the students willing to try new foods. I would like to thank Mr Rob Hofmeister, Marisa Mews our Chaplain and the Culture Friendship Club parents for assisting on the day. I also would like to thank all the families for making this day special and taking the time to prepare your special dishes for all the students to taste. A big thank you to the staff for organising the food buffet lunch for each class.

Over the last two weeks we have been conducting parent information sessions as part of our Kindergarten Orientation. The sessions have been valuable, and the students have had opportunities to engage in classroom activities and play. There are two more sessions scheduled for Monday 15 and 22 November at 9am in the library.

This week the Leeming and Bull Creek Lions Volunteers attended our school to conduct vision screening for our students. We are very lucky to be included in this free community program. Each student will be provided with a report in the next few weeks. Thank you to the volunteers who worked with our students and staff, your work is appreciated.

Soon staff will be packing up classes early as the school will be having new ceilings installed over the Christmas holidays. This is a massive job across the whole school and will take a lot of coordination.



FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

*Celebrating
Our Success*

The NAPLAN results have been published for schools. Bull Creek's results are comparable to "like" schools which have a similar demographic. The tables below indicate that the percentage of students above the National Minimum Standard for Numeracy, Reading and Writing exceeds 90%. We celebrate these outstanding NAPLAN results for 2021, which are a credit to our students, staff and parents. The staff also conducted a thorough interrogation of the data which can now be utilized to inform future planning.

Sharon Marchenko
Principal

NAPLAN 2021

	NAPLAN Numeracy								
	2018			2019			2021		
	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7
Above NMS	92%	90%		100%	91%		91%	97%	
At NMS	5%	10%		0%	9%		9%	3%	
Below NMS	3%	0%		0%	0%		0%	0%	

	NAPLAN Reading								
	2018			2019			2021		
	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7
Above NMS	97%	88%		96%	97%		98%	98%	
At NMS	3%	12%		4%	3%		2%	2%	
Below NMS	0%	0%		0%	0%		0%	0%	

	NAPLAN Writing								
	2018			2019			2021		
	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7
Above NMS	95%	95%		100%	94%		100%	94%	
At NMS	2%	2%		0%	6%		0%	3%	
Below NMS	3%	2%		0%	0%		0%	3%	



SCHOOL NEWS

INTERSCHOOL ATHLETICS

Interschool Athletics

The Interschool Athletics took place on Thursday 21 October. We had to fit all events into one day due to inclement weather on the Tuesday. Our students did themselves and the school proud by displaying excellent behaviour, attitude and sportsmanship. Bull Creek's results were outstanding, as indicated in Mrs Marchenko's notes, winning the Outright Champion Shield. I would like to commend all our competitors whose exceptional efforts contributed to a wonderful result. Thanks to the staff who trained and supervised our athletes. Congratulations to our individual champions and runners up.

Year 3 Runner-up Boy - Jake

Year 5 Champion Girl- Eva

Year 5 Champion Boy- Griffin

Year 6 Runner-up Girl- Eliza





SCHOOL NEWS

CHATTY CHAPLAIN NEWS

Wow!! How fast is this term going?

I have been very busy conducting a resilience program with some classes which I started in Term 3.

The aim of this is to teach students skills to bounce back from challenging situations, to step outside their comfort zones, problem solving and to be empowered to be the best version of themselves. I run the sessions weekly and for one hour.

I have incorporated activities which are designed to allow the students a safe place to grow their communication skills and teamwork. Often, this is hard for some students for many reasons including anxiety, lack of confidence, or just haven't learnt appropriate social cues.

A big part of ways to maintain or boost resilience is to make sure we have a healthy mind and body. By eating a healthy well-balanced diet, having good sleep patterns, drinking water and regular exercise.

One activity to encourage good food choices has been that students break into 4 large groups and design a day's worth of meals and snacks. I have been very impressed how many of our students are aware of what a well-balanced day looks like with their food intake.

I have attached a flyer which the students and I go through regularly to boost their resilience. I encourage you to go through these points with them at home and you will see many students take pride in knowing them off by heart.

If you have any questions on any of this, please feel free to contact me on marisa.mews@education.wa.edu.au

Kind regards

Marisa Mews
Chaplain

10 WAYS TO BOOST RESILIENCE

- #1 TAKE ON A CHALLENGE
- #2 ASKING FOR HELP AND SUPPORT
- #3 HAVE AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE
- #4 BE INTENTIONAL TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF
- #5 LOOK TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW
- #6 FIND PURPOSE IN WHAT YOU DO EACH DAY
- #7 CREATE SPACE TO REFLECT
- #8 STEP OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE
- #9 FIND SOLUTIONS NOT EXCUSES
- #10 MAINTAIN A HOPEFUL OUTLOOK

Phase
PROMOTE | PREVENT | SUPPORT



SCHOOL NEWS

2022 KINDERGARTEN ENROLMENTS

The School is currently taking enrolments for Kindergarten in 2021. If you are a parent, or know of a parent with a child that was born between **July 1 2017 and June 30 2018** they are eligible to attend Kindergarten in 2022.

Please enrol your child by coming into our school office.

You must provide ORIGINALS of the following documents:

- Birth Certificate
- Passport and Visa Information if applicable
- Immunisation Certificate - must be no more than 2 months old.
- Medical records where applicable (e.g. asthma, allergies, disability)
- Family Court Orders
- Proof of residence e.g. lease agreement, a current Synergy, Alinta, Telstra account showing your name and residential address.

If your child is not born in Australia, you must provide:

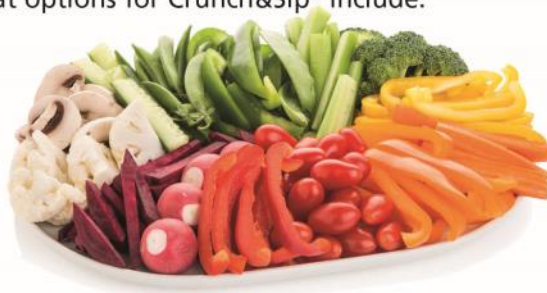
- Evidence of the date of entry into Australia
- Passport Number
- Visa Grant Number (This is the unique number assigned to the visa and shown on the letter that notified you of your visa grant)
- Passport or travel documents
- Current visa and previous visas (if applicable)



Crunch&Sip®

Eat a Rainbow of Vegetables Everyday for Crunch&Sip®!

Different coloured vegetables and fruit provide different vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients. Eat from across the rainbow to get the right balance of nutrients for good health. Some great options for Crunch&Sip® include:



Red – red capsicum, cherry tomatoes

Orange and yellow – carrot, yellow tomatoes, corn, yellow and orange capsicum

Green – celery, cucumber, snow peas, sugar snap peas, broccoli, green capsicum, spinach, zucchini

Blue and purple – purple carrot, purple cabbage, beetroot

White and brown – cauliflower, mushroom



SCHOOL NEWS

BANKSIA 6

Banksia 6 have been engaged in a unit of poetry work this term. Last week we learned about odes and our task was to choose someone who we value to write about. Elton, one of our beloved school cleaners comes in every afternoon and brightens our day with his kind demeanour. So we chose to write an ode to him, which every student contributed to. We presented it to him to let him know how much we appreciate him. It was the highlight of our week and we hope it was the highlight of Elton's!



Ms Phillips
Banksia 6 Teacher

Ode to Elton

Oh, Elton!

You are the most generous cleaner in the school.
You are as helpful as a dictionary, always supporting us.
You are the brightest pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.
Excellent, enthusiastic, exhilarating everybody's day.
You are the hardest working cleaner in the galaxy.
Oh, Elton how we value you!

Oh, Elton!

You are the brightest, most humble person in the school, a shining star.
You are as happy as a bright sun filled with joy.
You are the sunny day that makes us all smile.
Amazing, assisting, awesome, appreciative.
You are the nicest person to ever live.
Oh Elton, how we appreciate you!

Oh, Elton!

You are the most optimistic person.
You are like a vacuum, sucking away all the bad energy.
You are a superhero of destroying germs.
Brilliant, bold, bright, befriending.
We have been waiting a million years for such an incredible cleaner
and you Elton, answered our wish like a miracle.
Oh Elton, how we enjoy your presence!

Oh, Elton!

You are the best cleaner, helping out without expecting rewards.
You are as hard working as a bumble bee, always doing your best.
You are a bright light shining away all the dullness and dust.
Cheerful, courageous, caring cleaner.
You are the best cleaner in the whole world.
Oh Elton, how we love greeting you!

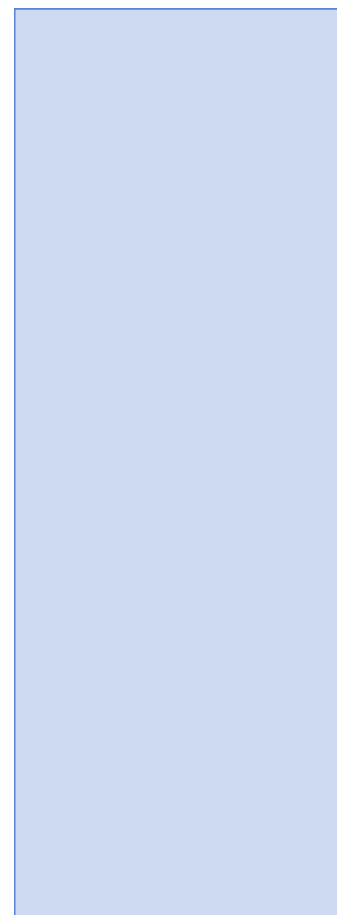
Oh, Elton!

You are the kindest man with a smile on your face.
You are as proud as a lion after catching its prey.
You are a shimmering star.
Fantastic, fabulous, fun, friendly.
You are the cleanest cleaner in the universe.
Oh Elton, how we love you!



SCHOOL NEWS

SHEOAK 6



WATTLE 10—Koalas



Our last term of Kindergarten is going very quickly. Mrs King, Mrs Armstrong and Ms MacFarlane are very proud of all that the Koalas can do now.

The Koalas are enjoying Edu dance and love copying Miss Winter's moves! They are trying their hardest to do all the dance steps to the music; "Baby Shark". We are all looking forward to performing at Celebration Night.

We enjoyed walking around the school looking at all the sculptures. Izzy and her Mum made a mural with different coloured bottle tops. They inspired us to have a go, making a picture with bottle tops in the classroom too. Bottle tops come in lots of different colours and sizes!

We have been learning our last few remaining letter sounds for the year. We made and ate jelly for the /j/ sound. It was yummy! We learnt /v/ for volcano last week. We made a volcano with vinegar and baking soda. It fizzed up and spilled over the edge of the volcano like lava. It was fun!

The children have been playing in the Bush Vet and attending to all the injured animals. One of the snakes had escaped its cage. Mrs King was very worried. A Mummy Koala and her Joey had a bad case of pink spots and were quickly treated with vaccinations. Poor kangaroo had a broken tail and wombat had a sore foot. It was great to see the vets were there to help all the animals so they can return to the bush.

Sophie has bought in two tadpoles we enjoy watching. Her Mum, Janelle, helped set up a perfect home for them with mud from the dam at the bottom of a bowl and then added some dam and rainwater. She put in some rocks for the tadpoles to climb out of the water when they get their legs and change into frogs. They have just started to get their back legs. They are eating lettuce and cucumber, a very healthy diet.





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Kalyang 5 Celebrates!

The aboriginal name for Wattle is Kalyang.

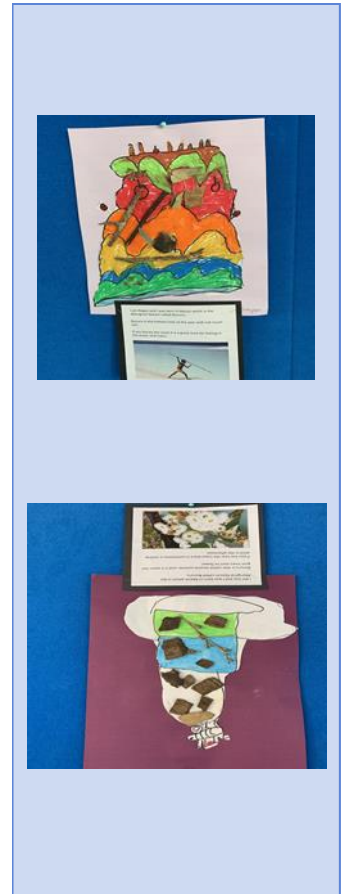


We have been learning about the aboriginal seasons and our birthdays. Our class enjoyed a nature walk and we chose a variety of natural materials to decorate our birthday cakes. We enjoyed drawing our own cakes and decorating them with materials from the bush.

I am Vihan and I was born in April which is the Aboriginal season called Dejeran. This season at last sees a break in the really hot weather. There are cool nights that once again bring a dewy presence for us to discover in the early mornings.

I am Helena and I was born in February which is the Aboriginal Season called Bunuru. Bunuru is the hottest time of the year with not much rain. If you live by the coast it is a great time for fishing in the ocean and rivers.

I am Amara and I was born in November which is the Aboriginal Season called Kambarang. Kambarang is Wildflower Season. There are many plants which start to flower. Some of our favourite wildflowers are the Australian Christmas Tree and Kangaroo Paws.



I am Asad and I was born in December which is the Aboriginal Season called Birak. Birak is the first summer and also fire season, a time to burn off the country side. For the animals, many snakes are looking to shed their old skin for a new one.

I am Nate and I was born in June which is the Aboriginal Season called Makuru. Makuru is the coldest and wettest time of the year. Sometimes there is even snow on the high peaks of the ranges.

I am Athira and I was born in August which is the Aboriginal Season called Djilba. Djilba is growing season. Lots of plants will start to make flowers which are mostly cream and yellow in colour. They are called Acacias.

Ms Bolton
Wattle 5 Teacher





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Help Bull Creek Primary School continue to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill by being a Nude Food Warrior.



What is Nude Food?

Nude food is food that is not wrapped in plastic, foil or other commercial or plastic type packaging.

Our targeted rubbish free days are every Tuesday and Thursday. There will be no bins available on these two days. Any rubbish will need to be taken back home in lunchboxes.

Bring a healthy rubbish free lunchbox to school every

TUESDAY and THURSDAY

*Our aim is to achieve rubbish free lunchboxes **EVERY** day of the week. Please do your part for the environment by eliminating throw away packaging in your child's lunch box.*





DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Term 4 - Week 6

Monday, 15 November	Edu-Dance
Monday, 15 November	Kindy Orientation
Monday, 15 November	Volunteer Thank You Morning Tea
Tuesday, 16 November	FLDC Parent Meeting
Thursday, 18 November	Edu-Dance
Thursday, 18 November	Year 5 & 6 German Movie Incursion
Friday, 19 November	Assembly—W2
Friday, 19 November	P&C Movie Night

Term 4 - Week 7

Monday, 22 November	Edu-Dance
Monday, 22 November	Kindy Orientation
Tuesday, 23 November	P&C Meeting—7pm in the Library
Thursday, 25 November	Edu-Dance

Term 4 - Week 8

Monday, 29 November	Edu-Dance
Wednesday, 1 December	Open Board Meeting
Thursday, 2 December	Edu-Dance
Friday, 3 December	Assembly—W8

Term 4 - Week 9

Monday, 6 December	Edu-Dance
Monday, 6 December	Leeming Senior High School Orientation
Monday, 6 December	Rossmoyne Senior High School Orientation
Tuesday, 7 December	Banksia End of Year Excursion—Willetton Basketball Stadium
Tuesday, 7 December	Graduation
Wednesday, 8 December	FLDC Graduation Assembly (FLDC Only)
Thursday, 9 December	Edu-Dance

Term 4 - Week 10

Monday, 13 December	Edu-Dance
Monday, 13 December	Celebration Night
Tuesday, 14 December	Reports home today
Tuesday, 14 December	Year 6 Leavers—Ninja West & Ice Skating
Wednesday, 15 December	Year 6 Leavers—Bounce & Bowling
Thursday, 16 December	LAST DAY OF SCHOOL





BCPS P&C NEWS

Email: bcpspandc@outlook.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/BullCreekPrimarySchoolPC

NEXT P&C MEETING – 23 November 2021 - 7.00PM (SCHOOL LIBRARY)

UPCOMING FUNDRAISER

Family Movie Night – 19 November



We are very happy to be hosting another Movie Night on Friday 19th November from 5.30pm.

Tickets are \$10 each. Kindy kids are free!

There will be a pizza truck for you to buy dinner or bring along a picnic. The P&C will sell fairy floss, lolly bags, ice creams and drinks.

To purchase tickets please click the link below or alternatively cash sales will be available at the door.

Secure your [Movie Night Tickets](#) here 😊

Bring along your family & friends to support us in our last fundraiser for the year and help us purchase extra iPads for the school for 2022. We look forward to seeing all of you there for this great community event!

P&C FUNDING

At our last meeting we committed the following funds:

- New large Esky for school events - \$450
- Year 6 Graduation - \$800

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kindy/Pre-Primary Playground works

Get excited! The upgrades to our beautiful new nature playground will be occur from 15 - 19th of November 2021. We're looking forward to seeing our kids enjoying the new features!



New P&C Executive Committee for 2022

Our President Nicky Stott has worked tirelessly almost every school day this year assisting in a role well beyond that of the President including regular canteen volunteering, running Fit Club, and assisting at every P&C event. She has also successfully introduced a number of new initiatives. We expect next year the President role will be much less onerous. Many of the existing P&C members will continue to support the role. We are now looking for a new Leader to continue to build on the success this year.

Get involved in our school parent community

Get on board our Parent Committee and have a say how funds raised are distributed. Help us to maintain a strong and supportive school community for the benefit of our children. Take on a role in the committee, be a class representative or casually attend our meetings to keep informed and raise ideas. We are open and inclusive and all are welcome.

We especially need regular support in canteen and in our fundraising committee.

School events are so much fun but also require a lot of coordination and organisation. Please come on board and help us to make these events happen for our kids. Help as much or as little as you can. The smiles on the faces of our kids are all worth it.



RECENT EVENTS

Colour Fun Run

Thank you for all who participated! We hope you enjoyed it as much as we did. It was a huge success with \$5,400 raised!

For those who ordered prizes will have them delivered by the end of the term. The Committee agreed last meeting that we aim to make this an annual event due to the high FUN FACTOR! We think you will agree.



BOOK CLUB

Thank you to everyone who continues to support Book Club.

Book club issue no. 7 was the last for this school year. If you would like to order from issue no. 8, please hop onto the book club website or even easier onto the App. You'll find the catalogue there and get the order sent directly home for a small delivery fee. Get your Christmas books and presents here [Book Club Loop](#) website.

Please ensure that you return the Boomerang bags for ongoing use. Thank you, Amanda, for sewing new yellow boomerang bags from old logo uniform t-shirts!

Please make sure you use any vouchers with issue dates in 2020 (or early 2021) by the end of this year.



CANTEEN – Term 4

We had a great Sculpture Walk Lunch with many families joining for lunch and admiring the fantastic sculptures.

We Need YOU



Please consider any help you can give by volunteering at the canteen. The Term 4 roster is now online. Canteen orders increase in Term 4 and regular volunteers drop off as they move on from the school.

Registering is easy and can be once-off for a 2-hour shift or at your chosen, regular interval.

Please head over here and make your commitment today: [Canteen Roster](#). Alternatively, contact Kylie in the canteen directly or email us bcpspandc@outlook.com. Get your family/friends involved, we really appreciate your support! Thank you 😊

Name Labels

Order name labels, school supplies and even your Christmas shirts and decoration at <https://www.brightstarkids.com.au/> support your school at the same time.

During the checkout process, just add Bull Creek Primary School under "Link's Fundraising Account" Easy.

Uniform Shop

Opening hours rest of term 4: Every Monday 8:30-9:00am.

Order online here <https://www.quickcliq.com.au> and collect on Mondays or get your order delivered to your child's class. Get organized early for the new school year!





P & C NEWS

Hurry last days!

Support us, buy an Entertainment Membership today & get a **BONUS \$40 or \$20 eGift Card!***

SUPPORT US & BUY NOW



UP TO
\$40*
VALUE



PLUS go into the draw to **WIN** a year's worth of groceries valued at **\$10,000!**^A

The savvy way to give!

Buy today and **20%** of the purchase goes directly to our fundraising cause.

SUPPORT US & BUY NOW

The savvy way to save!

Buy today and start saving with your new Membership

SUPPORT US & BUY NOW



Follow us



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Purchase today and enjoy plenty of savings at local retailers and venues such as: Woolworths, Coles, The Bull Creek Tavern, Subway, The Cheesecake Shop, Jesters, Nene Chicken, Pepper Lunch and Baskin-Robbins.

Based on the Membership you purchase between 9am Wednesday 27th October and 11.59am Wednesday 17th November AEDT, you will be able to claim a BONUS WISH eGift Card in the denomination assigned to the Membership product purchased. Get a BONUS \$20 WISH eGift Card when a Single City Membership is purchased or a \$40 WISH eGift Card when a Multi City or Multi Plus Membership is purchased.



P & C NEWS

ONGOING P&C FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES TO BE AWARE OF:

GILBERTS FRESH MARKET



Have you joined the Gilbert's SOS Program?

Gilbert's Fresh Market donates 1% of SOS Program customers' total spend to their nominated school every time they shop and scan their SOS card.
 There are no restrictions on what these funds can be used for at schools.
 The SOS Program is free to join and available to all customers.
 Why not join and help a local school?
 It's so easy!

Please ask our friendly Gilbert's checkout staff for more information.



Join our Support Our Schools Program (SOS)

Gilbert's Fresh Market will donate 1% of the money spent by you to your nominated school every time you shop with us.

Sign up at the checkout and simply present your SOS card for scanning each time you shop to earn funds for your school.

Available to all customers. Get your community involved and help our local schools.

No restrictions on what schools use the funds for -

- new resources & equipment
- improving school grounds and amenities
- subsidising excursions & camps for all to attend etc

Terms & Conditions:

1. Principal's permission is required for the school to participate
2. All staff & supporters to sign up to the school



Open 7 days
www.gilbertsfresh.com.au



SCHOOL NEWS



Brain development

Brain development affects children and young people's ability to form healthy, satisfying relationships and to succeed in learning and social environments.

Healthy brain development

This depends on several factors, including the quality and reliability of relationships that children and young people have within and outside the family.

Warm, responsive and trusting relationships provide optimal conditions for children and young people to learn and make sense of the world around them.

As an educator, you have an important role in supporting children and young people to develop in ways that ensure good health, wellbeing and success throughout their childhood, adolescence and into the future.

About brain architecture

Foundation for learning

The brain's structure (or architecture), provides the foundation for children and young people's learning. Brain development occurs sequentially, with lower and more primitive areas developing first (that is, those parts of the brain that regulate body functions such as breathing, heart rate and temperature). The prefrontal cortex is the last area of the brain to mature, in adulthood. This controls higher-order or 'executive' functioning.

A baby is born with billions of brain cells called neurons. The first 18-24 months of life see a tremendous growth in neural connections. These connections form pathways of communication between neurons which direct all our functions and behaviours.

Brain development is influenced by genes and the environment

While our genes determine the formation of neural connections, the connections are reinforced by experiences in the child or young person's environment. Connections that are stimulated through experiences are strengthened, while those that aren't are lost. Only connections needed for the person's environment are retained on the principle of 'use it or lose it.'

This process of forming and pruning connections continues into adulthood. The billions of connections that result from this process influence children and young people's future health, wellbeing, learning and behaviour.

How a child's brain develops

The early years are critical for brain development because of the rapid growth of neural connections at this stage. It's estimated that during the first few



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years of life, more than one million neural connections form every second.

These connections correspond with various skills

For example, when a child is learning to ride a bike, the skills required to ride, such as balancing, pushing pedals and watching ahead need to be stored in memory. This happens with repeated opportunities to practice these skills, so that when they ride on another day, they can do so without much thought thanks to the existing connections. If the child doesn't ride again for an extended period, they may need to make these connections all over again.

Experiences during the early years have the greatest impact on brain development – more than any other stage of life. The brain is most sensitive to stimulation during this period, so early experiences shape children's brain development and have a lasting effect on their mental health and wellbeing. Positive relationships and rich learning environments promote children's development while early adverse experiences may alter a child's progress.

Relationships and interactions

Most experiences occur through a child's relationship with their family and other significant adults, including early childhood educators. Positive interactions are described as 'serve and return': when adults respond appropriately to an infant or young child's needs (communicated through cries, smiles, babbling). In this way, the neural pathways responsible for communication and social skills are formed.

If an adult is consistently warm and responsive to the child, the brain architecture develops in an optimal way. However, if they're inconsistent, absent, unreliable or inappropriate in their responses, this can have a negative impact on the child's brain architecture, affecting future learning and behaviour.

Experiences in the early years affect the way children respond and react to the world they live in for the rest of their lives.

Positive brain development in early childhood

In your daily interactions with children, you help them develop their brain architecture.

There are several ways in which early childhood educators can positively influence brain development in babies and children:

Create safe and supportive environments for optimal wellbeing and development.

- Provide a safe and secure environment, where people are treated with care and respect.
- Provide warm and responsive care to children's physical and emotional needs.
- Build strong, positive relationships by showing an interest in a child's thoughts, feelings and experiences.
- Be inclusive of diverse cultures, personalities and interests.

Develop broader organisational and community strategies that support wellbeing.

- Regularly reflect on how the service supports children's wellbeing and how this could be improved.
- Undertake professional development on a range of topics related to children's mental health, wellbeing and development.
- Raise awareness of the importance of the early years for positive lifelong outcomes among colleagues, families and the community.

Help children learn social and emotional skills and manage their own behaviour.

- Provide opportunities for children to learn about their emotions and the emotions of others.
- Help them manage their behaviour by being clear about rules or expectations and guiding them to manage strong emotions like anger or frustration.
- Model positive communication skills with the children at the service, as well as with other educators.
- Acknowledge children's strengths and plan activities that cater to their development, interests, culture and preferences.

Identify children and families who may need additional support

- Observe and document the development and wellbeing of each child at the service.



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- Become familiar with the potential signs of mental health difficulties, mental illness (for example, anxiety or depression) or neurodevelopmental disorders (for example, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder).
- Maintain close relationships with families at the service so they feel comfortable discussing any concerns they have regarding their child's development or behaviour.

Link families with support and information services for mental health and wellbeing

- Be familiar with local health and education professionals who can support vulnerable children and families.
- Respectfully communicate with families about their child's development.
- Raise concerns about children with their families and, if appropriate, provide them with information about relevant support networks.
- Recommend reliable and trustworthy resources (such as websites) for families to access more information about their child's health and development.

Be You Professional Learning

Learn more about positive and supportive environments in the [Mentally Healthy Communities](#) domain.

Learn more about social and emotional learning (SEL) in the [Learning Resilience](#) domain.

Learn more about observing behavioural and emotional changes, having conversations with families and colleagues regarding any concerns, and providing access to information and additional support, in the [Early Support](#) domain.

Learn more about forming and maintaining collaborative relationships with families in the [Family Partnerships](#) domain.

Brain development in adolescence

Adolescence is also a time of significant brain development.

As a child grows to adolescence, unused connections in the thinking and processing part of their brain are 'pruned', while consistently used connections are strengthened.

By adolescence, the amygdala – the part of the brain associated with emotions, impulses, aggression and instinctive behaviour – is well developed. However, the pre-frontal cortex – responsible for one's ability to plan and think about the consequences of actions, solve problems and control impulses – doesn't fully develop until a person is in their mid-20s. As a result, young people at times rely on the amygdala to make decisions and solve problems, particularly in emotionally charged situations.

This is why adolescents are more likely to:

- act on impulse (this may be positive as they stretch their boundaries and try new things, or negative as they may take more risks or respond aggressively)
- try new adventurous activities
- explore new relationships
- misread or misinterpret social cues and emotions
- engage in dangerous or risky behaviour.

These brain differences don't mean that young people can't make rational decisions or tell the difference between right and wrong; nor does it mean they shouldn't be held responsible for their actions.

Adolescent development is often described through the metaphor of an incomplete car – 'all gas, no brakes'. While this metaphor can be somewhat useful in explaining how adolescents might be driven to seek sensations and emotions, and avoid others, it can also undermine the great capacity of adolescents. High-quality educational curriculum aims to challenge and grow adolescent brains and cognitive and emotional skills. Secondary school teachers play an important role in achieving this.

Positive brain development in adolescence

How young people spend their time is crucial to their brain development

It's worth thinking about the activities and experiences a young person is exposed to (such as music, sports, study, languages and video games) and how these shape the emerging adult brain.

While families are central to this process, schools and the broader community are also critical in



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providing learning experiences and activities. Schools and educators can help adolescents develop their higher-order planning, thinking and problem-solving skills through both planned activities and everyday interactions.

Tips for strengthening positive brain connections:

- Help students to find new creative and expressive outlets for their feelings, as a way to learn how to manage emotions (for instance, sport, music or writing).
- Help students explore immediate and long-term consequences of their actions.
- Support the development of empathy by talking about emotions and how people will have different reactions to events depending on their circumstances; encourage perspective-taking.
- Help students develop problem-solving and decision-making skills by supporting them to develop a process (define the problem, work through options, consider outcomes).
- Be a positive role model by talking to students about how you process information and deal with emotions and challenges.
- Deliver social and emotional or resilience skills programs to students.

Often adolescents require more time to process information and need instructions repeated calmly and succinctly, as well as benefiting from explanations or alternatives. It's often better to identify and suggest preferred behaviours rather than tell adolescents what not to do.

Better outcomes happen when you approach adolescents in an emotionally neutral manner and focus on your own behaviours, language and timing as well as theirs.

Toxic stress and brain development

Stress can significantly impact the developing brain

Stress is a fact of life. Often, it has a positive influence as it pushes children and young people to adapt to their environment and use new skills. When children and young people are faced with distressing situations that are minor and temporary (such as saying goodbye to a family member in the morning or preparing for an exam), they may have a short

period of elevated stress. But this stress response doesn't last long and is not harmful to the developing brain.

More serious situations may activate a severe stress response

Toxic stress occurs when a child or young person experiences strong, frequent or prolonged adversity without the support of a caring adult. This is one of the most damaging influences on the developing brain. Toxic stress can arise in situations of chronic violence; physical, emotional or sexual abuse; neglect; mental illness or drug addiction of a family member; or the accumulated effects of living in extreme financial hardship.

Toxic stress can negatively impact developing brain circuits, leading to a poorly controlled stress response system – one that's overly reactive or slow to shut down when faced with challenges throughout life. This influences every aspect of health and wellbeing in childhood and beyond.

Regardless of the type of stress, it's important to remember that if a child or young person has a strong, supportive relationship with at least one adult in their life, the damaging effects of these situations on brain development can be minimised or prevented altogether.

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