



MacKillop
St Mary MacKillop College Canberra

COLLEGE
NEWSLETTER

NO. **15**
15 SEPTEMBER 2017

In this edition.

MacKillop Day

Our College celebrated the Feast Day of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop with Mass and activities.

PAGE 3

INSPIRE

The results are in from the College's annual art competition, INSPIRE.

PAGE 4

Exchange Visit

Students from Liceo Fermi visited MacKillop over the past fortnight. It's our turn during the Term 3 holidays.

PAGE 5

Coming Up.

- FRIDAY
15 SEPT • Year 10 Spring Zing
- FRIDAY
22 SEPT • Final day of Term 3
- MONDAY
09 OCT • Term 4 begins
• Parent/Teacher Interviews (Isabella)
- TUESDAY
10 OCT • Parent/Teacher Interviews (Wanniassa)
- WEDNESDAY
11 OCT • Parent/Teacher Interviews (Isabella)
- THURSDAY
12 OCT • Parent/Teacher Interviews (Wanniassa)

Contact Us.



02 6209 0100



info@mackillop.act.edu.au



www.mackillop.act.edu.au



PO Box 1211
Tuggeranong ACT 2901



Mackinnon Street, **Wanniassa** (Years 7-9)
Ellerston Avenue, **Isabella Plains** (Years 10-12)



Lord, we give thanks for our community celebration of St Mary MacKillop last Friday. Amen.

The Principal's Letter.

Dear families, students and friends,

COLLEGE CAPTAIN ELECTIONS FOR 2018

Congratulations to the following students who have nominated for one or more of the six Year 12 student leadership positions for next year: Lochie Hattoch, Kurt Wassink, Tom Rogers, Thomas Couper-Logan, Elle Caldwell, Abbey Jameson, Annabelle Morton, Charly Lehmensich, Sarah Purcell, Maddy Bennett, Amber Brophy, Ashy Kinsella, Jasmin Statham-Smith, Maddie Prescott, Sophie Highmore, Harleen Kaur, Ryan Badowski, and Georgia Quinn.

Each student has completed an extensive nomination form and attended an interview conducted by myself, Campus Head Sandra Darley, Year 11 Coordinator Anna Keppel, and 2009 College Captain Brianna Thomas. Elections will be held next Wednesday and I'm sure Year 11 and staff who choose to vote will make a wise choice that will allow student leadership to continue to grow in 2018.

SATISFACTION SURVEYS

Thank you to the 377 parents who completed the survey. This was a 38% completion rate, which is considered to be quite good. The College has 1000 sets of parents in the current enrolment. The survey was extensive and as I am heavily involved in staff recruitment and senior staff appraisal, I will digest the results and make them available through the newsletter early next term. My initial response is overwhelmingly gratifying, with all areas of the questionnaire recording positive or very positive responses. Many parents have taken the time to provide valuable critical feedback, which will be considered and incorporated into future planning. Responses from students and staff were similarly positive.

MACKILLOP DAY 2017

Congratulations to everyone involved in the MacKillop Day Mass and Celebrations last Friday. There was a strong sense of community and enjoyment following a moving Mass, the ornaments of which were solemnity of Eucharist, a powerful homily, music of very high quality, and a brief but starring cameo role by one of our Italian exchange students, Fabio the fabulous, who provided a Prayer of the Faithful in unsurprising good Italian.

As this is the last newsletter for the Term, please allow me to thank all of you for your support and contribution to your children's learning and wellbeing and to the progress of the school.

Yours in St Mary MacKillop,

MICHAEL LEE
COLLEGE PRINCIPAL

"Thank you for your support and contribution to your children's learning."



College News.



MacKillop Day

St Mary MacKillop College celebrated the Feast Day of its patron with the annual MacKillop Day Mass and Activities on Friday 8 September.

Taking place a month after Mary MacKillop's official Feast Day on 8 August, students were able to enjoy the warm spring weather and the Class of 2017 could relax having completed the AST earlier in the week.

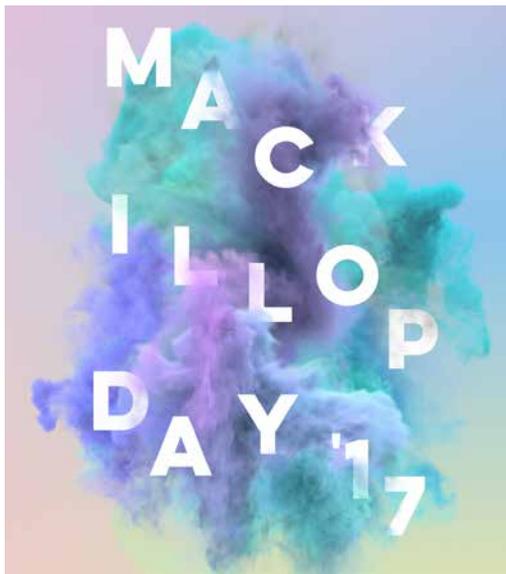
The day commenced with Mass at the Tuggeranong Basketball Stadium and concluded with a range of fun activities and stalls at the Isabella Campus. The activities at the Isabella Campus were festive, with activities like bumper balls, an obstacle course, the bungee run, upbeat music, and a wide range of food and drink.



All students are to be congratulated for their participation, dignity, reverence, and the spirited sense of community, which helped to make MacKillop Day a fantastic celebration of the Feast of our patron, St Mary of the Cross MacKillop.

The College thanks the staff involved in the organisation of the event as well as the many visitors, including students and teachers from other schools, parents, and past students of the College, who joined us for the Mass.

Special thanks to Fr Warrick Tonkin, who spent his last whole-College Mass with us before he moves to his new appointment at the Cathedral next year.





College News.



INSPIRE Art Competition

Congratulations to the following students who have won awards and/or prizes for the INSPIRE Art Competition:

Overall Winner: Ben Wiggan - Year 7
Mixed Media: Lana Malone - Year 8
People's Choice: Ben Freene - Year 9

Year 7/8 First Place: Beau Lovelock - Year 7
Year 7/8 Second Place: Jewel East - Year 8
Year 7/8 Highly Commended: Harrison Lye - Year 8

Year 9/10 First Place: Felix Huber - Year 10
Year 9/10 Second Place: Jasmine Harvey - Year 10
Year 9/10 Highly Commended: Rachel Manangan - Year 9

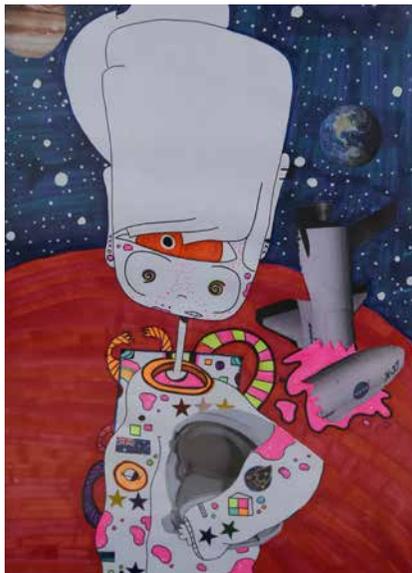
Year 11/12 First Place: Rosie Mingay - Year 12
Year 11/12 Second Place: Kieran Mala - Year 12

There were over 50 entries - well done to all who entered. Emails will be sent home to parents notifying them if their son or daughter's work has been selected for exhibition at the Tuggeranong Arts Centre. The official opening will be Thursday 21 September at 6pm and family and friends of the students whose work is on display are warmly invited. The exhibition will be open for viewing by the general public at the Tuggeranong Arts Centre from Tuesday, 19 September until Sunday, 1 October.

Thank you to the judges who assisted me this year: Mr Aidan Brunskill and Ms Narelle Phillips (Tuggeranong Arts Centre).

Tamara Murdoch

Visual Arts Coordinator





College News.



Sister School Visit

Over the last fortnight, MacKillop has enjoyed hosting 22 students from our Italian sister school, Liceo Fermi, located in Padua. Thank you to the MacKillop families who generously opened their homes to our Italian guests. The exchange students experienced Australian culture, cuisine and participated in classroom activities. The students visited Tidbinbilla and explored the national institutions within the Parliamentary Triangle. A highlight of the visit was the joint-school trip to Sydney for host students and exchange students. We look forward to visiting Padua and Italy during the Term 3 holidays.

Peter Johnson

International Programs Officer



Battle for Australia ceremony

On Wednesday 6 September, four Year 9 Defence students attended the Battle for Australia commemoration ceremony at the Australian War Memorial. Prior to the ceremony, the students participated in making a wattle wreath, which was placed at the centre of the theatre. The students were lucky enough to hear from the Director of the War Memorial, Dr Brendan Nelson, who spoke about the importance of Australian students learning about the sacrifices of those in the Second World War, resulting in us being Australians who are "young and free". The students also heard from other guest speakers and were led in song by the Royal Military Band, accompanied by the Australian Rugby Choir. Overall, it was a wonderful opportunity to represent the College and the Defence community, as well as experience first-hand accounts of the Second World War, through the stories of the Veterans.

Hayley Arnold, Jessica Lee, Ellen Scott + Ainsley Wellfare

Year 9 students

Sport News

TOUCH FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS

On 30 August, Year 7/8 boys and girls teams competed in the Touch Football Community day. Both the boys and girls went through the round robin undefeated. The boys won comfortably against Campbell High School in the semi-final, before coming from behind in the final against Melba Copland to become the overall winners of the day. In the semi, the girls played Campbell High, winning convincingly. The final against St John Paul II College was tied at full time, but the MacKillop girls ran out winners with a sensational attacking move that resulted in the only try in extra time. Both teams are to be congratulated for their performances.

Bejenice Sidorko

RE Project Officer/Coach

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT

Liam Rogers (Year 9) will represent the ACT at the Australian Junior Squash Championships in Geelong during the school holidays.



What's been happening?



YEAR 12 SAT THE AST

Tertiary students hoping to gain an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) sat the ACT Scaling Test (AST) on Tuesday and Wednesday last week. The AST involves a multiple choice test, short response test, and a writing task. The results of the AST contribute to the calculation of each student's ATAR.



MEUP MEUP HOUSE CHARITY

This week was Meup Meup's House Charity Week to raise money and awareness in support of New Hope for Cambodian Children. NHCC provides support for children with HIV/AIDS to live rich and full lives through family style care, necessary medicine and a quality education. Both campuses were involved with a "support your team" uniform variation for a gold coin donation as well as enjoying a pizza lunch. Thank you to all who joined in the House Charity events!

Admin News & Notices.

Progress Reports and Parent Teacher Interviews

Progress reports will be emailed home on Wednesday 20 September. These reports provide parents and carers with a general view about the progress of their son or daughter over term 3. Teachers will indicate whether an interview is recommended. Parents and carers are also welcome to make interviews to see their son's or daughter's teachers. Parent Teacher Online (P.T.O.), the booking system for interviews, will be open from 9am on Thursday 21 September. Parent teacher interviews are scheduled for Week 1 in Term 4:

Years 7-9 Wanniasa Campus	Tuesday 10 October 4pm – 7pm Thursday 12 October 4pm – 6pm
Years 10-12 Isabella Campus	Monday 9 October 4pm – 7pm Wednesday 11 October 4pm – 6pm

Parents and carers are asked to ensure that the college has a current work and home email address for the delivery of the report. Please contact Amanda Lowman to update these details, if required, on 62095299 or at amanda.lowman@mackillop.act.edu.au.

Mařia O'Donnell

Assistant Principal Curriculum (Acting)

Summer Uniform

A reminder that from the beginning of Term 4 all students are to wear the summer uniform.

- For boys this means that tailored mid-grey school shorts are an option in addition to the trousers. Grey or black socks may be worn with the trousers, however if shorts are worn the socks must be grey.
- Junior girls may wear the teal check summer dress with plain short white socks, or the tailored navy slacks with MacKillop monogram and a white over-blouse with MacKillop monogram.
- Senior girls may wear the pleated tartan skirt with plain short white socks, or the tailored navy slacks with MacKillop monogram and a white senior over-blouse
- Any holiday 'variations' such as facial piercings or fashionable extremes to hair such as colours or styles should be rectified before returning to school for the new term.
- School shoes are to be traditional, lace up, black and polishable

More detailed information is available in the Student diary, on the College website and on Canvas. If there are circumstances that prevent students from wearing the correct uniform, they are required to bring a signed note from their parents to explain the situation. They need to present this to their Pastoral Care Coordinator during PC time each morning to obtain a uniform pass.

Monica Bailey

Assistant Principal Pastoral Care (Acting)

Changes to ACTION Timetables

On Saturday 7 October 2017, Transport Canberra will be introducing a revised network and timetable. Some dedicated school services have changed and the new timetables and maps are now available for parents and students to view on the schools page of the Transport Canberra website. You can choose to search by Route Number or School Name. Visit transport.act.gov.au for information.

Monica Bailey

Assistant Principal Pastoral Care (Acting)

Careers News

TRANSPORT CANBERRA ASBAs

Transport Canberra is seeking to recruit Heavy Vehicle Mechanic apprentices and Australian School Based Apprentices for 2018. An Apprentice and ASBA Information Night will take place from 6pm on 12 October at ACTION House, 200 Scollay St, Greenway. Register for the information session by Friday 29 September to actionrecruitment@act.gov.au.

Karen Hundy

Careers + VET Coordinator

School Fees

Thank you to the families who have paid Term 3 fees. Any outstanding fees should be paid immediately unless paying by Direct Debit or other approved arrangement.

Term 4 fees will be sent out during the holidays. Term 4 fees are due to be paid by 27 October 2017.

Please note – if you pay via Direct Debit your fee statement will be automatically emailed to your home email address. If you would like to switch off your paper statements and receive Fee Statements via email, please send an email to me at michelle.predovan@mackillop.act.edu.au from the email address you would like to receive your statement.

If you require more information regarding Direct Debit arrangements or other approved payment methods or are experiencing difficulty paying the fees please contact the Fees Office.

Michelle Predovan

Fees Manager



Pastoral Care.

Positive Psychology

Positive psychology is a form of psychology that emphasizes the importance of oneself by focusing on the positive aspects of life such as fundamental qualities and personality traits which allow us to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives. The field is designed to work alongside conventional psychology as opposed to replacing it entirely.

During Pastoral Program last week each class in Year 8 was given a subtopic relating to positive psychology, one of these was 'Positive self-talk'. Self-talk comes in two distinct categories positive and negative. It's perfectly normal to experience both in everyday life but negative self-talk can lead to self-doubt and the inability to construct positive thoughts.

Positive psychology develops confidence and operates as a deterrent to stress and anxiety. Discussing positive psychology in a school environment allows students to adopt mentalities of positivity as well as confidence in ability, appearance and personality.

Monica Bailey

Assistant Principal Pastoral Care (Acting)

Year 10 'Batyr' Pastoral Program

Representatives from Batyr spoke to the Year 10 cohort as a part of our 'Mental Health' focussed Pastoral Program this term. Their aim is to engage, educate and empower young people to have positive conversations about mental health. We heard inspiring stories from those who have battled through mental health and strategies including who and how they reached out for help. Both representatives showed amazing resilience which left an impression on the cohort.

Haylee Bell

Year 10 Student

Parentingideas.

The article below "The Myth of Multitasking" notes that so much of children's school work and study is done on a computer or tablet that it gets tricky to discern how much of their screen time is work and how much is scrolling the internet and in particular social media. Most of us try our hand at multi-tasking but research suggests that we reduce the effectiveness of our brain so the task takes longer. The article suggests ways we can create positive habits to support to effective use of time.

Menslink

Menslink came to our school for Pastoral Program to talk to the Year 10, 11 and 12 male students about how to speak up if we think we have depression or even if we aren't feeling okay. They told us how to deal with the situation if someone is feeling that way and who to go to if we are feeling not ourselves. 'Silence is Deadly' was the focus of the presentation where the guest speaker addressed how to be an active listener for our mates, ensuring we look after our own mental health at the same time. This was a rewarding and rich experience as it taught us some valuable life lessons.

Patrick Langson

Year 10 Student



Embrace Uniqueness

Shantelle Saiville from SaviChix addressed the Year 10, 11 and 12 female students about the experiences that she encountered growing up throughout her life and about how and why these events occurred. The presentation was based on the '7 Steps to Empowerment' and how to 'Embrace Uniqueness'. She was passionate about telling young women to be themselves and to strive for the things that they wanted to achieve in life. From this, we collectively took away many messages to embrace who as well as our own uniqueness.

Abigail Adera

Year 10 Student

Academic News.

Year 12 students seeking Uni admission

A variety of schemes exist to assist students to gain entry to university. These schemes are:

A. School Recommendation Scheme (SRS)

This scheme is designed to offer students early entry to a range of courses at a range of universities. Students need to:

1. Make application via the UAC website (www.uac.edu.au/srs/)
2. Complete the SRS form available from Ms Lemon at the front office.
3. Make application online and complete (and return) the form by Friday 22nd September.

B. Educational Access Scheme (EAS)

This scheme aims to accommodate the impact of factors beyond student control which impact student achievement. These include illness, financial hardship, family issues etc. Students need:

1. To complete the application form (see Mrs O'Donnell).
2. Provide evidence to support their claim.
3. Send the form and documentation for processing.

C. ANU Spirit of Excellence(SEE)

The ANU Spirit of Excellence Entrance (SEE) Scheme offers early entry to Year 12 students.

- The scheme considers co-curricular awards and achievements, Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background, Pasifika background, Elite Athlete status,
- Applications must be made to UAC by 4.30pm on 29 September 2017.
- More information can be found at <http://www.anu.edu.au/study/apply/anu-spirit-of-excellence-entrance-scheme> or by seeing Mrs O'Donnell.

D. Equity Scholarship

This scheme provides financial assistance for disadvantaged students wishing to pursue tertiary studies.

- Students can make application for this scheme over a range of dates. The final date for application is Friday 5 January 4.30pm.
- For more information go to www.uac.edu.au/equity/ or see Mrs O'Donnell.

Please contact Maria O'Donnell on 62090140 or via email at maria.odonnell@mackillop.act.edu.au with any questions.

Maria O'Donnell

Assistant Principal Curriculum (Acting)

BSSS Quality Assessment Tasks

Last week we received news from the Board of Senior Secondary Studies (B.S.S.S.) about the quality of our assessment tasks. The B.S.S.S. commended our College for having the greatest number of high quality tasks of any senior school in the ACT for two successive moderation periods. This is a wonderful achievement and attests to the professional knowledge, collaboration and reflection of our teachers. This offers our students the opportunity to engage with contemporary high quality tasks which challenge them and develop their capacity as learners.

Maria O'Donnell

Assistant Principal Curriculum (Acting)

Tournament of Minds

Congratulations to the MacKillop students who participated in the Tournament of Minds Regional Competition on the weekend of 2 and 3 September! Teams of students in Years 7, 8 and 9 worked collaboratively each week preparing for their long-term challenge in the fields of Mathematics Engineering and Science Technology. Students broke apart the posed problems and assembled quirky and ingenious responses to their chosen challenges. Both of the MacKillop teams performed well on their competition day and should be very proud of their efforts. The Science Technology team won their division and will now be competing in the ACT Final this weekend. Good luck to these students!

Science Technology Team:

Olivia Boddington, Rhys Haynes, Gabby Milgate, Montana Mundy, Kira Tawton, Matisse Winfield

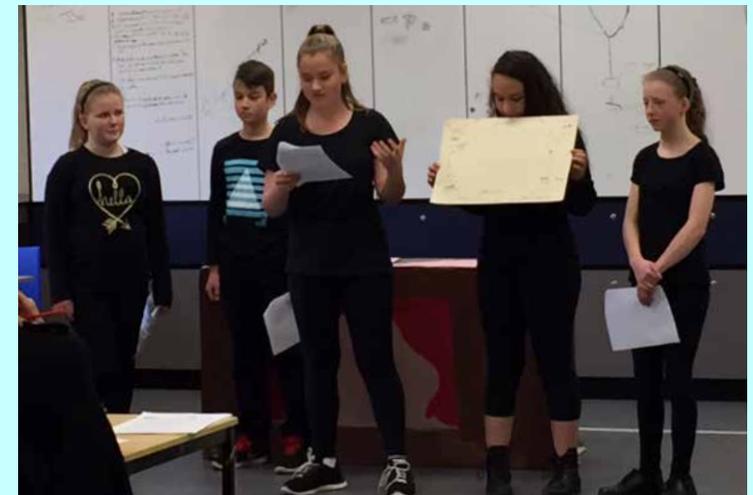
Mathematics Engineering Team:

Alex Amon, Patrick Cunningham, Callum Doherty, Mikayla Fitzpatrick, Tyla Hardy, Aaron Nguyen

Also, a huge thank you to Julia Del Bianco and Caitlyn Williams who gave countless hours after school assisting in the facilitation of activity!

Beth Bright

Numeracy Coordinator



Academic News.



Joe Cinque's Consolation

On Sunday 26 October 1997 at 1.50pm Joe Cinque was pronounced dead.

Many Year 12 Tertiary students have been given the opportunity to read *Joe Cinque's Consolation* as part of the English syllabus that is Unit Four - Perspectives. Gradually, even students not formally studying the book have chosen to read it and it has become a popular and widely discussed text among both senior students and staff.

Joe Cinque's Consolation was published by Helen Garner in 2004, three years after Anu Singh was released from prison, having served four years for the manslaughter of Joe Cinque. The controversy that surrounds the case; the dinner parties held to celebrate a 'double suicide', the heroin supplier now practising law in Canberra and; the fact that her best friend Madhavi Rao was allowed to walk free and pursue a successful career in law overseas are all facets of a fascinating and terrifying case that still resonates with people today.

The book raises many questions about the individual's moral responsibilities, group ethics and our justice system and while Garner raised all of these questions in her book our Year 12 students at St Mary MacKillop College found many answers when given the opportunity to speak with Former Detective Superintendent Greg Ranse who was the Head of Investigations into the murder of Joe Cinque.

Mr Ranse came to the Isabella campus on Thursday 7 September to speak with students about his experiences of the case, his interactions with Singh, her family and the Cinque family. After an introduction in which he outlined his thirty years of experience with the AFP and his experience of the investigation students were invited to ask questions in an open forum style afternoon. Mr Ranse was measured in his responses and offered insight into the justice system and more significantly on human motivations and behaviours. The students found the afternoon informative and many students later said they are still reflecting on some of the lines of discussion the afternoon offered. Students from English, Legal Studies and Psychology attended the afternoon as did many staff. Such an opportunity is rare and we are grateful to Greg for giving his time to us to share his insights and expertise. Significantly his main message was that our motto 'Faith and Courage' is one we must carry in our lives as individuals. That our faith and our understanding of what we know to be morally right and true must inform our courage to stand up and use our voice against what we know to be wrong.

I want to thank Greg Ranse, Tahlia Howard and her father for making this educational highlight of our 2017 academic year a significant learning experience for our staff and students.

Nicola McLennan

English Coordinator (Isabella)



Study trip to Melbourne

Can you imagine what it is like to sleep in Space? Have you ever wondered what it would be like to trek for days on end while surrounded by swarms of unexplainable affairs? Do you know what it is like to be faced with a tremendous concern... a great ordeal... a BIG ISSUE that will change your perspective on life forever? Well, a select group from the Year 12 Economics class does.

During Week 5 of Semester 2, Mr Batten led an exciting expedition around the diverse city of Melbourne. After an early flight (and a gorgeous sunrise), the group stormed the infamous Queen Victoria Markets and demanded to know its deep-rooted history, economic stability, benefits and incentives, and taste test the fresh products being offered from the family store fronts.

After a light breakfast, the small expedition visited the 'Big Issue' headquarters. Here, they uncovered a lot of truth surrounding the serious issue of poverty in Melbourne and were exposed to first-hand experience about the way that social enterprises, such as the 'Big Issue', support, aid, and give purpose to people who are otherwise disadvantaged.

Following the wake-up-call to these real life social problems, the small group were taken on a tour around the backstreets of Melbourne's CBD. Being blessed with an in-the-know tour guide, the students were told all of the secrets of Melbourne – from Federation Square to Hosier Street-Art, to the best places to get coffee, vintage books and retro clothing, to hidden fashion icons and historical banks. We were supplied with a new perspective on the cultural hub of Melbourne.

After dinner at the Il Gambero, dessert at Brunetti's, and an 18-hour day, the small group of six resigned to the Space Hotel where they, along with the hospitality and art students, would spend the next two nights.

The next day began with a tour of Richmond, the Vietnamese capital of Melbourne. We were then fed an exquisite traditional Australian lunch at Charcoal Lane, another social enterprise that focussed on alleviating the disadvantage felt by young Aboriginal peoples. Dinner was served at Lentil As Anything, where an all vegan menu, an absence of price tags and the whole hearted staff opened the students' eyes to the importance of giving.

The final day ended with our exhausted, but enlightened, group exploring the city as we saw fit before flying home that evening. Despite all of the amazing experiences that we had and touching things that we saw, the highlight of this trip was a group selfie with the notorious Mr Batten – whom we thank very much and are endlessly grateful for.

Nikala Speed

Year 12 Student

Community News.

Notices from the wider community

VIKINGS WATER POLO COME AND TRY DAY

Sunday 17 September, 10am-12pm at Lakeside Leisure Centre, Greenway. For more information and to register your interest, visit <http://www.vikingswaterpolo.com>.

TENNIS CANBERRA

Tennis Canberra is hosting FREE Junior Tennis Hot Shots community sessions at Erindale. These sessions take place in Weeks 9 & 10 (Term 3) and Week 1 (Term 4). Visit www.tenniscanberra.com.au for information.

CANBERRA SCHOOL OF TENNIS

Come and try tennis for FREE at The Pines Tennis Club, Chisholm. Call or email to find out a suitable day and time (all participants will receive a special offer for Term 4 2017 lessons). Juniors from the age of 4+ and adults are welcome. Contact Head Coach Robert Jamieson on 0432 118 204 or via email at robert@csot.com.au.

VIKINGS BASEBALL

Registration for Vikings Baseball is now open. To register, simply go to the Facebook Page and click on the registration post: <https://www.facebook.com/VikingsBaseballCub>. Please register by 30 September and email any questions to vikingsbaseballtuggeranong@gmail.com or visit the blog at <http://vikings-baseball.blogspot.com>.

STEM SELLS

STEM Sells is a 10-week after school program for girls in Years 7, 8 and 9 with hands-on STEM activities and building entrepreneurial skills. It runs on Tuesday afternoon 4:30-7:30pm at CIT Reid. Information and registration is available at stemsells.eventbrite.com.au.

QUESTACON MAKER PROJECT HOLIDAY WORKSHOPS

Do you like making and building things? Sign up to a Questacon Maker Project workshop during these holidays at the Ian Potter Foundation Technology Learning Centre in Deakin. Choose from a variety of workshops where you can invent, design, create, and have fun! Workshops will be offered on 3, 4, and 5 October. Suitable for 10-15-year-olds only. Visit www.questacon.edu.au for information.

SUTHERLAND SOFTBALL CLUB

The Junior Come'n'try Day takes place on Saturday 16 September, 10am-12pm, at Mawson Playing Fields. To register your interest, visit www.sutherlandact.softball.org.au or contact the Club at sutherlandsoftball@gmail.com.

GEO CATCH POSSUM NIGHT WALK

Join GeoCatch for a FREE Possum Night Walk in Busselton this school holidays. Bring your family and friends to see critically endangered Western Ringtail possums and find out why they are special and how we can look after them! Register at <https://geocatch.asn.au/events/>

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS PRESENTATIONS

These free presentations are aimed at improving the awareness of Mental Health as it affects our youth. They will be delivered by persons with a lived experience of Mental Illness (From Mental Illness Education ACT). It is also planned to have representatives from Carers Act and a school counsellor to speak about some of the support services available in the ACT. There will be some opportunity for Q&A.

- Wed 11 Oct: 7.30 – 9.00pm, Dickson College, Dickson.
- Tues 17 Oct: 7.30 – 9.00 pm, Canberra College Performance Arts Centre, Phillip.

For any information contact Chris van Reyk on 0450 799 456 or csvanreyk@gmail.com.

JDRF HIGH TEA FUNDRAISER

This takes place on Sunday 22 October, 1.30-4pm at Gold Creek Station. Music, sandwiches, scones, cakes, tea, coffee, and bubbles will be available. Funds raised will go towards type 1 diabetes research. For tickets and information, visit <https://www.trybooking.com/295512>

GIVIT FLORIADÉ 'BUGS+BLOOMS' WORKSHOPS

Create whimsical insects and flowers from recycled materials for the sculptural Rejuvenation Garden at #DonateRejuvenate House at Floriade. BUGS + BLOOMS invites kids to let their imaginations run wild, whilst learning about the importance of up-cycling ordinary household items. Working alongside local artists, kids will have the opportunity to experience the joy of donating an insect or flower to Rejuvenation Garden plus take a creation home. For accompanied children 7 years old and up. Brought to you by GIVIT, matching generosity with genuine need, in association with Wellspring Environmental Arts & Design.

Dates: Saturday 23 September – Sunday 8 October

Times: 11:00am & 1:00pm daily

Location: #DonateRejuvenate House, Floriade, Commonwealth Park

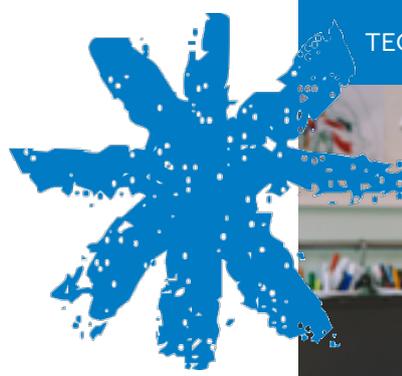
Tickets: <https://premier.ticketek.com.au/shows/Show.aspx?sh=BUGSBLOO17>

PARENTLINE

Being a parent is the hardest job we'll ever have. All parents at some time experience difficulties and stress. Parentline ACT is a confidential and free telephone and face-to-face counselling and information service. Phone Parentline if you would you like:

- To talk with someone about those parenting issues.
- Help with some ideas on raising children.
- Support in the important job you are doing.
- To know what is available for parents, teenagers and children.
- To build better relationships in your family.
- Help to understand your child or teenager's behaviour.
- Make an appointment for a counselling session.

Monday to Friday (except on public holidays), 9am to 5pm. Phone: 6287 3833.



The Myth of Multitasking

by Martine Oglethorpe

Being a parent today has plenty of challenges, none more so than keeping up with what our kids are doing on their devices. This is particularly the case when we think they should be using their time more productively.

These days so much of the kids' school work and study is done on a computer or tablet that it gets tricky to discern how much of their screen time is work and how much is scrolling on Instagram or snapping on Snapchat.

Of course our kids don't see a problem with this. They believe they are pretty proficient multitaskers, able to scroll a social media feed, live stream music, answer a text message and study for their maths test at the same time.

And we shouldn't be surprised that they think this, because most of us think the same. Most parents are also now regular users of a digital device and also believe we can multitask with ease. We routinely scan Facebook while simultaneously stirring the cheese sauce, breaking up an argument in the other room and listening to our partner recap their day at work.

The truth is that neither our kids nor ourselves can effectively multitask and do the best job possible at any given time. Research tells us that the brain has a finite amount of attention it can devote at any one moment in time. When we pile tasks on top of one another, we reduce the effectiveness of our brain as it must now share that limited resource amongst those multiple jobs. We are not multitasking – we are switch tasking. This means that each of those tasks takes longer as we rapidly flick our attention from one of them to another, refocusing each time. We lose momentum and we lose efficiency.

So how can we help our kids (and ourselves) stay focused and concentrate on one task at a time?

Have them set up study blocks

This can start with time slots as short as 20 minutes in which they focus on one task only for that period. The blocks need to be timed and need to be devoted to only a single task.

Turn off notifications

The ringing and beeping of a device will always encourage diversion as the owner feels the need to respond to their messages or check that email. By turning off all the noise-based distractions, your kids (and you) are less likely to be interrupted during a focused study period.

Allow them to reward themselves

Each time they manage to complete a set study period, they can be rewarded with a short break to do



something else. If this is checking social media then they need to set a timer and stick to it. We all know how easily we can get sucked into the vortex of social media feeds and never-ending scrolling. Other breaks might involve playing with a pet or listening to a song. Getting up and moving to get the blood pumping is a great way to take a break and ensure your brain is ready to refocus when the time comes for the next block.

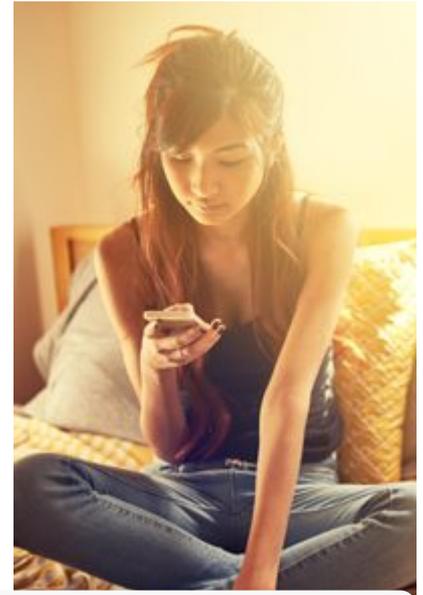
Invest in an analogue clock

Use a clock or a visual timer that counts down the time for each study period. When the brain sees time literally ticking away it finds it easier to grasp the concept of how fast time is going and, in turn, what is being accomplished in that time. This doesn't quite work the same way when we use a digital clock, so using an analogue clock can be a really useful exercise to try.

Monitor your child

When parents lament to me that they don't know if their child is doing any work, or they are always distracted by their devices, then I ask them to have the conversation with them. Find out what they are doing and if they are struggling with anything. Look at how they are keeping up with all aspects of their lives. Ask their teacher if they are still on track. Remember that monitoring your child – and not just on their devices – is the best way to ensure they are in control and getting the things done that they need to be doing.

There are certainly some tasks that we can do at the same time without compromising efficiency. Hanging out the washing while listening to a podcast is something I can confidently achieve. But when it comes to more cognitive pursuits that require greater focus, then we must remember that our brains need to be able to focus solely on one task at a time in order to achieve them in the most productive manner possible.



Martine Oglethorpe

Martine Oglethorpe is a speaker, counsellor and educator with a passion for building resilient kids in a digital world. Martine is available for student workshops focused on positive online behaviours, for teacher professional development on how the digital world affects what happens in the classroom and for corporate and parent information sessions. For more information head to her website themodernparent.net. Contact details: info@martineoglethorpe.com.au, themodernparent.net, facebook.com/themodernparent