

# College

# Newsletter



# MacKillop

St Mary MacKillop College Canberra



## Volume *Six*

19 May 2023

# Coming

# Up

TUE 2 3 M A Y

- Year 7 Camp Parent/Carer Information Evening

MON 2 9 M A Y

- Reconciliation Day (Public Holiday)

MON 0 5 J U N

- Year 10 Exams

TUE 0 6 J U N

- Year 10 Exams

WED 0 7 J U N

- Year 10 Exams

THU 0 8 J U N

- Last day of Classes - Year 11 and 12

FRI 0 9 J U N

- Senior Exams

MON 1 2 J U N

- King's Birthday

TUE 1 3 J U N

- Senior Exams



# Principal's Letter

## *Principal's Prayer*

In this month of May, dedicated to Mary, Mother of God, we pray to Mary to intercede before God on our behalf for all our needs. Amen.



Dear parents/carers, teachers and students,

### **Enrolment Period Events**

The College has hosted several events in the last few weeks as a part of the enrolment period. These have included welcoming approximately 1500 visitors to the Padua Campus for Information Evenings and tours, accommodating 530 Year 6 students to experience Try MacKillop Day and a highly successful Year 11 2024 Information Evening and Careers Expo. Critical to the success of these events has been the willingness of so many MacKillop students to volunteer their time and be ambassadors of the College.

The impact of our students in speaking so articulately and confidently about the College, their experiences and advocating for their school has been a recurring theme from the feedback at the events and during enrolment interviews I have had with families since. It is great that so many of our students are willing to share their experiences with others and encourage them to be a part of our school community so that they may also experience the benefits of student life at MacKillop. I am very grateful to all the students who contributed to these events in so many varied ways.

If you have a child in Year 6 or know of families who are considering enrolling in Year 7 at MacKillop for 2024, it is essential that enrolment applications are submitted by the deadline at 5.00pm on Friday 26 May.

All applications must be completed online and are accessible [HERE](#)

### **'Tell them from Me' Parent and Student Surveys**

Early next week parents/carers will receive information about accessing a parent survey for 2023. The survey offers an opportunity to reflect on your experiences of the College, provide affirmation and constructive feedback. Responses from the surveys will be examined by the leadership of the College and used to inform the strategic directions for MacKillop, resourcing and school improvement plans. While I appreciate that people are very busy, taking approximately 15 minutes to complete the survey will be extremely valuable. As always, the voice and insights of our parents/carers is very welcome.

Students will also be invited to complete a survey at school in the coming weeks.

### **Student Achievements and Recognition**

MacKillop students have achieved some outstanding success recently.

Congratulations to the Year 8 Da Vinci Decathlon team who won the ACT region competition which is based on higher order thinking skills, problem solving and creativity. This is a significant accomplishment demonstrating the great academic abilities and teamwork of the Year 8 team.

Many of our musicians have travelled this week to participate in the prestigious Cowra Eisteddfod. The College music program has continued to grow and develop the skills of students under the expert tuition of Music teachers Veronica Boulton, Henry South and Mitchell James. MacKillop achieved: First place in Senior strings, first in Junior band, first in secondary choir, first in school vocal choir, best overall choir award, second in Junior strings, and highly commended in the Senior wind and guitar ensembles. Congratulations to all the students involved along with the above staff. We will have a detailed report and some photos in the next newsletter.

Yesterday I was honoured to attend the ACT Cancer Council Biggest Morning Tea at Government House hosted by the Governor General. I was accompanied by four Year 12 students and Year 12 Pastoral Care Coordinator, Charles Bootes. This was in recognition of Year 12 raising over \$73,000 for the Cancer Council through the Relay for Life in Term 1. The students who attended, Emma, Chloe, Kathleen and Joel were the highest individual fundraisers within the Year 12 cohort.

Yours sincerely,

**Mr Lachlan McNicol**  
**College Principal (Acting)**





# MacKillop

St Mary MacKillop College Canberra

# We're enrolling now for 2024!

Visit our website to enrol or for more  
information:

[www.mackillop.act.edu.au](http://www.mackillop.act.edu.au)



## Enrolment application deadlines

MAY

26

## Applications due for Year 7, 2024

Online applications due by 5pm

JUN

30

## Applications due for Year 11, 2024

Only new students (who are not already at MacKillop) need to apply

Enrolment enquiries: [enrolments@mackillop.act.edu.au](mailto:enrolments@mackillop.act.edu.au)

*A Catholic school for all.*







## Da Vinci Decathlon

The Da Vinci Decathlon is an academic competition designed to challenge and stimulate the minds of school students. Students compete across 10 disciplines: engineering, mathematics, code breaking, art and poetry, science, English, ideation, creative producers, cartography and legacy. The ACT Region competition was held at Canberra Grammar School last week.

Congratulations to our Year 8 team, who won several disciplines and finished as the overall winner. This team will now represent the ACT at the National Finals in September.

We also congratulate our Year 7 and Year 9 teams, who also performed strongly. The Year 7 team achieved to place 1st in the Engineering category.

## Careers Expo and Year 11, 2024 Information Night

St Mary MacKillop College held its annual Careers Expo and Year 11, 2024 Information Night on Wednesday 10 May.

The Careers Expo is one of the most valuable events for our senior students in the planning of their pathways after Year 12. Students were able to talk with universities, CIT, employment groups, apprenticeships centres, trades, and industry representatives in order to understand their options and opportunities in the future.

The Careers Expo ran alongside the Year 11, 2024 Information Night. Current Year 10 MacKillop students and prospective students were able to access the Careers Expo as well as faculty stalls for curriculum information. They also listened to a talk from acting College Principal Lachlan McNicol about the senior years and some of our visitors had tours of the St Peter's Campus.

The College thanks all the stall presenters and the large team who put the evening together under the leadership of Ms Karen Hundy, the Careers & VET Coordinator.

We hope the evening was useful for our Senior Campus students!





## Australia's Biggest Morning Tea

To celebrate Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, four students from Year 12, who were the highest fundraisers for Relay for Life, were invited on behalf of Their Excellencies the Governor-General and Mrs Linda Hurley, for morning tea at Government House on Thursday 18 May.

The students were presented a token of the Governor-General's appreciation for their fundraising efforts. Both the Governor-General and Mrs Hurley recognised and applauded the tremendous effort of Year 12 in **raising a total of \$73,904** which set a new school record and was the second highest total raised by any group in Australia.

This is an amazing effort and I would like to congratulate every Year 12 student for supporting this amazing cause and leading by example.

Of course, the fundraising efforts of Year 12 were not possible without the many, many people in our community who donated to the cause. The College once again would like to thank all who contributed.

**Charles Bootes • Year 12 Pastoral Care Coordinator**





## Cross Country Carnival

The College's Cross Country was held at each campus on Friday 19 May. The Cross Country Carnival is a community event that is designed for maximum participation and the promotion of a positive, healthy lifestyle.

In the morning, senior students had the chance to opt in and join Year 10 in the running of the St Peter's Campus Cross Country during Period 1. Students ran a 5km course around Isabella Plains or had the option to walk/run a 3km course.

In Periods 3 and 4, Years 7-9 stopped their regularly scheduled classes to participate in the Padua Campus Cross Country. The 2.5km course circled the Padua Campus and a small section of Wanniasa.

The top performers from today's carnivals have now qualified for the ASC Cross Country Championships. Congratulations to all of our participants!





## Blessed Virgin Mary and the Rosary

The month of May is a time of reflection following the celebration of the season of Easter. It is also a month devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary. One of the most popular devotions to Mary during this month is the recitation of the Rosary.

The Rosary is a prayer that combines meditation on the life of Jesus Christ with the repetition of prayers such as the Hail Mary and the Our Father. It has been a cherished tradition in the Catholic Church for centuries, and it is often associated with Mary due to its emphasis on her role as the Mother of God and her intercessory power.

During the month of May, many Catholic communities come together to recite the Rosary, often in a public setting such as a church or a park. This practice fosters a sense of unity and solidarity among believers and serves as a reminder of the power of prayer and the intercession of Mary.

The Rosary can be a powerful tool for personal prayer and reflection as well. By meditating on the mysteries of the life of Jesus, we can deepen our understanding of his message and his love for us. This can bring us closer to God and help us to live our lives with greater purpose and meaning.

In recent years, the Rosary has also gained popularity among non-Catholic Christians and even people of other faiths. Its emphasis on meditation and prayer can be a valuable spiritual practice for anyone seeking a deeper connection with God.

Throughout May, let us embrace the tradition of the Rosary and take time to reflect on the life of Jesus and the intercession of Mary. Whether we recite it alone or with others, let us use this prayer as a way to grow in our faith and draw closer to God.

**St Mary MacKillop of the Cross – Pray for Us**

**Our Blessed Mother Mary – Pray for Us**

**Clare Kinnane • Assistant Principal for Faith, Mission and RE**





## Year 12 Construction Pathways

Reece Wohl, a successful tiler who owns RW Tiling and is an ex-student of our College, generously volunteered his time on Wednesday 10 May to come in and run a two-hour tiling session for our Year 12 Construction Pathways students.

Students commented on how grateful they were to have someone from the industry come in and show them that what they are learning in class is directly applicable to the trades. Reece's practical demonstrations and hands-on approach were particularly effective, and our students came away from the session eager to get started on their practical tiling assessment.

Reece commented that the Construction Pathways program is an excellent program that puts students in a strong position to enter trades after school. It was great to see our students benefitting from the expertise of professionals like Reece, and we are incredibly grateful for his willingness to give back to the community in this way. We look forward to continuing to work with industry professionals to provide our students with the best possible learning experiences into the future.

**Braden Longo • Industrial Design & Technology Coordinator**





## Artificial Intelligence and Education

AI (Artificial Intelligence) is new, stunning in its capabilities, and raises many questions, threats and opportunities – and education is right in the middle of the debate.

The Vision and Mission of the College can provide clarity in times of uncertainty, reminding us that MacKillop is “A learning environment where excellence in education is valued”.

Education is all about learning – we are not here just to learn, but to obtain excellence in learning.

“Learning is a consequence of thinking” – Emeritus professor David Perkins of Harvard’s School of Graduate Education.

If we are true to that Vision and Mission statement – valuing excellence in learning – then as a College we must value student thinking as the focus of all the work we do.

School tasks, including assessment tasks, are designed for students to learn by undertaking and applying a range of thinking skills. This effort in thinking, and ensuing learning, is the true value of student work and the focus of assessment. The ‘academic voice’ students produce – their unique style – is a window into their thinking.

This means that the use of AI tools (and even writing tools that are increasingly incorporating AI powered generative text) puts students at risk of misrepresenting their thinking (and learning) and thus puts them at risk of academic misconduct in assessment. In addition, these tools, (as powerful, innovative and intriguing as they are) can be a shortcut to thinking, and thus bypass the thing we value most – the learning.

The world of AI has put rapid production of ‘finished products’ at the click of a button. However, in education the real value, the student growth, comes from the rigour of the academic journey rather than the destination.

At MacKillop, we are embracing this challenge as we modify our assessment policy and procedures moving forward. We will continue to build a learning environment where the students can understand and value the academic journey and an encouraging environment where they have opportunity, and incentive to develop, refine and empower confidence in their own voice.

**Tristan Burg • Assistant Principal Academic Care (acting)**

## Titration Competition at the ANU

On Thursday 11 March, six Year 12 Chemistry students represented MacKillop at the Royal Australian Chemistry Institute Titration competition, held at the ANU. While not victorious on the night, students gained valuable experience in working in the university teaching laboratories, and enjoyed the opportunity to show off their titration skills as they competed with students from all across Canberra.

**Dr Melissa Pert • Science Coordinator (St Peter's)**



## 2023 Rostrum Voice of Youth Competition

Congratulations to Millie Terracini (Year 10) for representing the College at the Regional Finals of the 2023 Rostrum Voice of Youth Competition in Sydney on Thursday 11 May. Millie was commended by the judges for her powerful speech.

**Erin White • English Coordinator (Padua)**



## Senior Dance

This week Senior Dance have been learning Calisthenics with a guest tutor Sam Thomas as part of their studies into entrepreneurship. The style let them explore fluidity, precision, flexibility while wielding a rod.

**Bella van Doorn**  
**Performing Arts Coordinator (Dance & Drama)**



## Try St Peter's Day

*By Ava Codey and Alexander Brooks*

On Friday 5 May, the Year 8 cohort attended a very important and informative experience at the St Peter's Campus. Students participated in several activities to help familiarise themselves with the campus and the different options available to them. These included a Careers presentation by Ms Hundy, a guided tour of the beautiful Mary MacKillop Garden by the Year 12 students, and a Q&A forum with past students. We got to observe some lessons, which were more advanced than we currently experience. We also experienced campus tours led by Year 10 students, which showed us the different teaching spaces that are available. Year 8 really enjoyed the day and we appreciate all the effort that went into making it a great experience for us all. Caitlin O'Meara, a Year 8 student, has captured the day perfectly...



I enjoyed Try St Peter's Day because it showed me what my experience would be like at the Senior Campus. I had the opportunity to explore a Science class where we built catapults that had the intention of shooting a ball into a bucket but not only that; we were able to experience Science in the Julian Tenison Woods Laboratories. I also went on the MacKillop walk, which was honestly my favourite part. I liked seeing and hearing about how the abstract designs were markers for major parts of St Mary MacKillop's life. I found it to be a calming place with deep meaning behind it. I found the career presentation very helpful regarding what the College offers with career experience and what strengths companies are looking for when hiring - it is information I will keep in mind when it is time for me to get a job. Overall, I enjoyed our visit to St Peter's and look forward to attending the Senior Campus in a few years.

**Caitlin O'Meara • Year 8**

## Year 7 Camp *Parent/Carer Information Evening*

A Year 7 Camp Parent/Carer Information Evening will be held for interested parents/carers at 6:00pm on Tuesday 23 May in the Padua Campus Theatre. Some Year 7 students (and parents/carers) may be excited and have little concern about the camp. However, others may have anxieties surrounding particular aspects of the camp or the whole camp in general. The information evening will provide an opportunity for parents/carers to receive an overview of the camp and address any general questions in order to ensure that the camp is accessible to all in a safe and enjoyable environment.

**Please note that the information evening is intended for a parent/carers audience**

**Paul Durham • Assistant Principal, Pastoral Care**

## Student Absences & Late Arrivals

St Mary MacKillop College requires parents/carers to provide a written explanation of their child's absence from school.

If students will be absent from school, parents/carers are requested to notify the College in advance, or on the day of the absence, by texting the Absentee SMS (Text) Line – **0429 131 463**

## House Charity Fundraising

Last term, the Padua Campus and St Peter's Campus Student Representative Council (SRC) members came together to discuss our charitable plans for the year. The SRC were treated to an educational and inspiring speech about the work of MacKillop House from Josephite Sister Noelene (former foundation MacKillop Principal). Inspired by Sister Noelene, the SRC proposed devoting all four house charity weeks to support MacKillop House. MacKillop House provides exceptional support to women, and their families, in our community who may be experiencing domestic violence or need other support. With roughly 26 separate rooms or house-like accommodations, MacKillop House provides warmth and comfort for all women and their children who may need it. This initiative has touched the hearts of so many in our school community, and with the College's help, we will be able to provide better resources and a safer, more comfortable environment. It gives action to St Mary MacKillop's saying of *'never see a need without doing something about it.'*

The whole MacKillop community looks forward to changing these women's lives for the better. The four House Captains have been working very hard to create exciting fundraising events that will take place throughout the year. We start with Meup Meup which is happening in Week 5 - next week!

We look forward to seeing you all get involved. We hope for our 25th Jubilee Year, we can come together and raise money for a great cause!

**Toby Barber • Communications and Connection Captain**

# MEUP MEUP

## House Charity Week



### Starting on Wednesday in Week 5.

We have a variety of events:

- **Photobooth for \$2 per photo**
  - Wednesday at St Peter's Campus
  - Friday at Padua Campus
- **Uniform variation of an Oodie or a Dressing Gown for a Gold Coin Donation** (perfect for these cold conditions)
  - Thursday at both Campuses
- **Goodberrys for \$7 per ice cream cup**
  - Wednesday at Padua Campus
  - Friday at St Peter's Campus



## Online Safety Webinars for Parents and Carers

Online safety is a concern for all within our community. Here at St Mary MacKillop College through our Pastoral Care Program and interactions with students on a daily basis, we promote safe behaviors and work to educate students to make informed and safe decisions.

The eSafety Commissioner is Australia's independent regulator for online safety and provides up-to-date information in the online space as well as providing numerous resources and webinars, for schools, students, parents and carers to access.

There are a number of opportunities to attend webinars for parents and carers to access and attend webinars by clicking the following link: [eSafety Commissioner Webinars for Parents and Carers](#).

Topics that will be covered include:

- Setting your child up for success online
- eSafety 101: how eSafety can help you
- Online relationships and consent: sending nudes and sexting
- Getting started with social media: TikTok, YouTube, Instagram

Any feedback from parents or carers that attend any of the above mentioned webinars would be greatly valued by the College. Please email [nathan.wood@mackillop.act.edu.au](mailto:nathan.wood@mackillop.act.edu.au)

**Nathan Wood**  
Director of Student Wellbeing (Padua Campus)

## Menslink Counselling

### *Low Wait Times*

For over 20 years Menslink has been providing counselling for young males aged 10-25 years.

Menslink would like to advise that currently there are low wait times for any young males who feel they would benefit from counselling. The service is offered at no charge, no limit to sessions, and no Mental Health Care Plan is needed.

If you or someone you know is having a hard time and could use someone to talk to, get in touch with Menslink.

Located in Holder and Kippax, Menslink is open during school terms and holidays and are completely confidential.

[Click here](#) to find out more about Menslink.

[Click here](#) to fill out a Help Request Form.

If you need more information you can  
**Email: [admin@menslink.org.au](mailto:admin@menslink.org.au)** or  
**Call: 6287 2226.**

## Padua Campus Pick-Up

Student safety around carparks and roads at the conclusion of the school day is imperative. We kindly ask that all parents and carers please collect students at the conclusion of the school day from the basketball courts. Access to the front of campus carpark for student collection is granted for those requiring access to the disabled parking available in this carpark only. Thank you for your understanding.





## Junior Dance Company

Term 3 is going to see the launch of our Junior Dance Company for students in Years 7 to 9 who love or are interested in contemporary dance. The company will learn technique and choreography as they work towards a performance in Term 4.

### Details are as follows:

**Date:** Every Tuesday Morning  
Starting Week 2 Term 3, Tuesday 25 July

**Starting Time:** 8:00am

**Finishing Time:** 8:50am

**Venue:** Moira Najdecki Theatre, Padua Campus, Wanniasa

**Cost:** There will be no cost to families

Notes are available from the Performing Arts Staff Room

**Bella van Doorn**  
**Performing Arts Coordinator (Dance & Drama)**

## Music at MacKillop

Students can participate in our in-school instrumental tuition through the College. If you would like to take part or for further information, please speak with Ms Boulton or Mr South.

### Instrumental tuition that is available:

**Woodwind** – Flute, Clarinet, Saxophone  
**Brass** – Trumpet, Trombone, French Horn, Euphonium, Tuba  
**Percussion** – Drum Kit and Orchestral Percussion  
**String** – Violin, Viola, 'Cello, Double Bass, Guitar, Bass  
**Piano**  
**Voice**

### Our Ensemble Program:

<b>Mon</b>	MacKillop Choir	St Peter's	3:45-4:30pm
	PCoPA	St Peter's	4:30-5:30pm
<b>Wed</b>	Guitar Ensemble	Padua - Music Room	8-8:45pm
	Senior Wind Ensemble	St Peter's - Music Room	3:45-5pm
	St Peter's String Ensemble	St Peter's - ARC Theatre	3:45-5pm
<b>Thu</b>	Junior Band	Padua - Ensemble Room	8:15-9am
	Junior Strings	Padua - Music Room	8:15-9am
	Musical	Padua - Theatre	3:45-5:30pm
<b>Fri</b>	Padua Concert Band	Padua - Ensemble Room	8-9am
	Padua String Ensemble	Padua - Music Room	8-9am

**Veronica Boulton**  
**Director of Music & Performance**

**BE A VOICE  
FOR  
GENERATIONS**

**NATIONAL  
RECONCILIATION  
WEEK 2023**

**27 MAY — 3 JUNE**

**ACT TODAY FOR A RECONCILED TOMORROW**

**#NRW2023**

**NRW.RECONCILIATION.ORG.AU**



## National Reconciliation Week

National Reconciliation Week is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures, and achievements and to explore how each of us can contribute to achieving reconciliation in Australia.

The theme this year is Be a Voice for Generations. The dates remain the same each year - 27 May to 3 June. These dates commemorate two significant milestones, the successful 1967 referendum and the High Court Mabo decision.

Reconciliation must live in the hearts, minds and actions of all Australians as we move forward in creating a nation strengthened by respectful relationships between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**Jeremy Margosis • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Contact Teacher**

## INSPIRE 2023 *St Mary MacKillop Art Competition*

Each year St Mary MacKillop College holds an art competition with the theme 'Inspire.' This competition is open to students in Years 7 to 12 and prizes are awarded in the following categories:

- Overall Winner
- Digital Media
- Drawing
- Mixed Media
- Painting
- Photography
- Sculpture
- People's Choice Award

Following a display of all entries at MacKillop Day, a selection of the best works will be exhibited at the Tuggeranong Arts Centre. **Minimum size for artwork is A4** and the due date for **entries is Friday 25 August**.

**Francesca Miller • Visual Arts Coordinator (Acting)**



**2022 Overall Winner**

## Sport



## AFL Champions

Congratulations to both our Year 7-9 Boys and Girls AFL teams who both won the ACT Southside AFL Gala Day on Tuesday 2 May.

## Student Achievement

Grace Lyons (Year 12) has been selected for the ACT Meteors Women's Cricket Team.

Angus Withington (Year 9) won gold in the U17 Men's Team Sprint at the 2023 AusCycling Junior Track National Championships. Angus and his team also set a new ACT record for the event.

Ty Pettersen (Year 12) represented the ACT at the Opens Gymnastic Nationals and placed 1st on the parallel bars and finished 3rd overall.

Nicholas Christian (Year 8) competed in the National Athletics Competition in Brisbane winning gold in the 3km Race Walk.

Keira Polmanteer (Year 12) represented the ACT in the U21s Hockey and has also been selected for the U18's Nationals Tournament to be held in July.

Cody Owen (Year 9) is competing in the Crankworx World Tour Mountain Biking competition in May in Cairns.

Jack Edwards and William Mundy (Year 9) have been selected to play in the U18 School Sport ACT Boys Softball Team where he will be competing in Victoria in May.

India Dyball (Year 12) was awarded the Coaches Award for her involvement in the Tarsha Gale Cup at the Canberra Raiders 2023 Junior Representative Presentation Night.



## Family Literacy Event

*ACT Primary, NSW Primary & Central Principals*

Council of Catholic School Parents (CCSP) invites all families to join in an online book reading by author and scientist, Corey Tutt, from his book *The First Scientists*. On the evening of Tuesday 30 May, from the comfort of their home, families can connect online to hear Corey read to their children while also picking up a few tips to help improve their child's literacy skills.

[Click here to register](#)

**Contact Person:** Sarah Rose, Parent Engagement Officer -  
(sarah.rose@cg.catholic.edu.au or 0447 888 326)

## Mathematics Information Evening

*Interested in learning more about pathways in Mathematics?* The Mathematics Information Evening is available to provide information about the Maths courses offered and the pathways available to students across junior and into senior schooling. All parents/carers of Year 7-10 students are welcome.

The Information Evening will be held in the **Padua Campus Theatre on Wednesday 14 June from 5:30pm.**

**Dylan Watt • Mathematics Coordinator (St Peter's Campus)**

## Second Hand Uniform Shop (SHUS)

**SALE - The SHUS is holding its first ever sale.**

Sports shorts and sports polo prices have been reduced to \$10 each. This may be an opportune time to get that additional PE uniform or to think of PE uniforms requirements for later this year or even next year. Be early for the best chance to snap up your required sizes. **This sale ends on 31 May 2023.**

Remember to email [uniforms@mackillop.act.edu.au](mailto:uniforms@mackillop.act.edu.au) or text/call 0427 089 370 to make an appointment for the SHUS.

**Judy • Uniform Shop Coordinator**

## Fees are now overdue

Fees for Term 2 should now be finalised unless paying by Direct Debit or other approved arrangement. **Any outstanding fees should be paid immediately.**

It is most important that you notify the College regarding any changes to your email address as this is our primary form of communication.

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**

## Community News

### Shine Om - Teen Yoga Class

[Shine Om](#) is a yoga, mindfulness and well-being business for kids, teens and families. The programs on offer can support young people, help them to learn to how to feel connected with themselves, show compassion to others and teach strategies to reduce stress.

### Online Teen Yoga

**Dates:** Classes operate on Tuesdays during the school term.

**Time:** 4:30 - 5:15pm

**Location:** Via Zoom

**Book via our website:** [Click here](#)



# MacKillop

St Mary MacKillop College Canberra

## Contact details



**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)



**Absentee SMS Line**  
**0429 131 463**

## Socials



**www.facebook.com/  
mackillop.act**



**www.twitter.com/  
mackillop\_act**



**www.instagram.com/  
mackillop\_act**



**www.youtube.com/  
stmarymackillop**

# Consent Conversations with Kids

Understanding consent as a concept is essential to everyday life and relationships for people of all ages - and it often has nothing to do with sexual intimacy. Consent exists in every interpersonal context, like in the playground as kids learn to negotiate mutually enjoyable games to play, respecting others' boundaries or managing disappointment when someone says no.

Consent education encourages children to think about what makes for respectful attitudes and behaviour. We can - and need to - create a positive consent culture where children and young people immediately think to ask: "Is everyone safe? Is this a safe space for others? Do I feel safe?"

The topic of teaching consent to children sometimes raises concerns. Parents want to know when it is appropriate. Age-appropriate consent education often has little to do with 'sex', especially for younger kids. It's actually teaching fundamental decision-making skills that will serve them well in their lifetime journey into adulthood.

Parents/carers play a key role in teaching children about consent. It is a critical responsibility to build this knowledge and these skills early.

Some examples of consent education by parents/carers at different ages:

## 1 - 5 years old: Body safety and naming body parts

Learning about body safety needs to happen at a very young age. Everyone has the right to body autonomy and should be able to develop the tools to verbalise their boundaries and feel safe. Body safety information results in kids having the power and knowledge to know who is allowed to touch their body and strategies to respond when boundaries are not listened to. I.e., "stop it I don't like it"

But consent is also about understanding 'yes' and 'no'. Hugs, tickles, kisses, and so on all fall under the consent umbrella.

## 5 - 8 years old: Communication skills

Consent means our children learn how to negotiate an activity that everyone will enjoy. You can also teach children the importance of how to pay attention to verbal and non-verbal cues e.g., being aware if someone seems uncomfortable when they ask to play with them or if the other person suddenly doesn't look like they are having fun in a shared game. You can talk to your kids about how to deal with their disappointment when a friend says no.

## 8 - 13 years old: Mutuality and negotiation

Consent means “permission” which involves both/all people. We need to highlight that the person who suggests doing something should take equal responsibility for a yes, not just the person they are asking being required to take responsibility/be the gatekeeper for the no or yes. This teaches mutually pleasurable/enjoyable experiences by emphasising the importance of suggesting something that everyone is likely to enjoy.

For example in, [Kit and Arlo Find A Way](#) a group of friends are planning to watch a movie. Most of the group want to watch a horror movie but they all know one person in the group gets really scared watching those movies. The friends should think about whether that person will feel pressured to watch that movie because everyone else wants to. The friends should think about whether they should even suggest it in the first place, since they know that person won't want to say yes. They should all consider what type of movie everyone would want to watch so that everyone enjoys the experience.

## 14 - 18 years old: Feeling safe to withdraw consent

The ability to withdraw consent and feel safe to do so, is essential. We all need the courage, skills and sense of self to be able to say that we have changed our mind. We also need to learn how to provide a safe space for others to do so to reduce or eliminate the social cost of a refusal. It's vitally important to recognise that females have been conditioned to be caregivers; polite and agreeable. They've historically been taught to be nice and not hurt other's feelings. Communicating what they want and don't want can be hard for some who might lack confidence, vocabulary, and/or power to speak up about how they feel.

Consent is not just a single 'yes' that can't be taken back. People can change their minds. Young people need to be taught how to check in with one another to see if everyone is still having a good time. If someone changes their mind, that should be respected. Checking in is a communication skill everyone needs and must value. The result is enjoyment, safety, and wellbeing for everyone.

## Final thoughts

Parents/carers play an essential role in shaping their children's understanding of consent. Research shows that conversations about consent at early ages impacts the skills and behaviour children need as they grow up. Teaching topics like body boundaries and empathy is empowering, offering kids the words and confidence to stand up for themselves and others. Let's start talking to our kids about consent today and set them up for healthy, safe, respectful relationships in the future.



### AUTHOR

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