



Term 3 Week 4  
Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021  
Website: [www.stmarysrydalmere.catholic.edu.au](http://www.stmarysrydalmere.catholic.edu.au)

1 Myrtle Street, Rydalmere  
Ph: 8844 5700  
Email: [stmarysrydal@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:stmarysrydal@parra.catholic.edu.au)

## DIARY DATES

TERM 3	2021
Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> August	Zone Athletics Carnival – <b>POSTPONED</b>
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> August	First Holy Communion Year 3 <b>POSTPONED</b>
Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> August	Book Character Parade <b>POSTPONED</b>
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> August	Josh Heath Author Visit <b>POSTPONED</b>
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> August	Year 5 Camp <b>CANCELLED</b>
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> August	First Holy Communion Year 3 <b>POSTPONED</b>

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Parents,

St Mary of the Cross Mackillop Feast Day Mary MacKillop will be celebrated around the country on Sunday. St Mary of the Cross is a sign of hope to us all, because she developed her natural qualities and used them in the pursuit of God's work for, and with, the poor. Her life is an example of how that work made a significant difference to the lives of those she encountered. Her work was not for her own personal satisfaction but in God's name and to bring the love & compassion of God to others. There are many different and significant characteristics that were particular to Mary's nature. Some of these attributes include:

- Mary was courageous in the face of challenge
- She was slow to judge
- Mary acted from a compassionate heart

She brought the love of God and a grateful heart to her work. In the hardworking yet ordinariness of her life, Mary achieved the extraordinary, in the service of God for the poor and the marginalized. Mary's faith and love of God shone through.

At this time of great challenge for your family and our community she continues to be a sign of hope, a sign of encouragement to us all.

Peace and Best Wishes. Stay safe!

Richard Blissenden  
Principal

Cont...

**MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY COVID 19 WEBSITE**

The Centre for Emotional Health – have a live **COVID-19: We've Got This Covered!** website. This site is the result of an amazing collaboration between the Centre for Emotional Health and the School of Education at Macquarie University. It is an important collection of strategies and tips to support parents, carers, teachers and educators alike in helping to manage anxiety in children during COVID-19. You can help promote the COVID-19 website with the hashtag #WeveGotThisCovered. The website can be accessed from the above link or via this link <https://www.mq.edu.au/research/research-centres-groups-and-facilities/healthy-people/centres/centre-for-emotional-health-ceh/covid-19-weve-got-this-covered!>

**SCHOOL FEES**

All families should have received their Term 3 invoice for the final instalment of school fees for the year. The due date on the invoices is 18th August 2021. Given the ongoing restrictions and lockdown, we are aware that many people are living in a period of financial uncertainty at the moment. For this reason, please don't feel pressure to have fees paid by this due date. Families are welcome to extend the due date for fees until term 4. Catholic Education, Diocese of Parramatta remains committed to ensuring no family is denied a Catholic Education if they are experiencing genuine ongoing financial hardship. If you feel your financial situation may be ongoing and prevent you finalising your fees by year end, we can offer you an application to apply for fee assistance. Susan Albertini is currently working remotely and can be contacted on [salbertini@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:salbertini@parra.catholic.edu.au) or by leaving a message at the school office if you need to discuss deferring fees until term 4 or if you feel you may require further financial assistance.

**BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**



- |           |                                   |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| August 4  | Alina N<br>Shane B<br>Mitchell B  |
| August 5  | Marcus R                          |
| August 6  | Lachlan P                         |
| August 9  | Christiano M                      |
| August 10 | Emma C<br>John C<br>Ellie S       |
| August 11 | Mikako D                          |
| August 13 | Samuel M                          |
| August 14 | Jayden C<br>Tristian T<br>Isaac L |
| August 15 | Sean T                            |
| August 16 | Kevin M                           |

We wish these children a very Happy Birthday!



## FROM MR BLISSENDEN...

### **LESSONS FOR CORONAVIRUS**

The causes of stress fit into the acronym NUTS: novelty; unpredictability; threat (or perceived threat); sense of control. Pandemic viruses hit on all of those stressors, more so for the young, for whom the novelty is higher and a sense of control lower. Neuroscience shows that it is adversity in life, dealing with tolerable challenges, that wires the brain for resilience.

So, while ideally we will be spared the worst of the crisis, there's also an opportunity to use it to help our children. Make a plan ... and a Plan B. Visualising how to navigate a situation activates neural pathways in ways similar to actually doing the thing. This is why airlines give the same instructions to passengers time after time.

Anticipate difficulties and make multiple plans to navigate them. It can be paralysing to feel you have only one route and that is blocked, so make a Plan B too.

Make a list. Putting plans, thoughts and concerns on paper can increase a sense of control, lower the power of those concerns and free up cognitive resources.

Assign children something to do. Parents want to make children feel safe but it's better if we make them feel brave and give them a sense of control.

Teach children where to get help. Talk about what they should do if they feel ill or afraid.

Show them where emergency supplies are kept. Share your plans. That helps engage their pre-frontal cortex and its problem-solving faculties, calming their amygdala (the stress response) and strengthening the connections between the two.

Teach children what to do. When they can see washing hands as something that helps others and not just themselves, it increases their sense of control. Hygiene becomes a super power!

Spread calm. When family members are alarmed or panicking, calmly say, "Do I look worried? This is manageable." Take the long view. We can remind ourselves of the difficulties we and our families have weathered in the past. It engages our coping skills, helping us better figure out how we will get through this challenge if it comes our way.

Talk back against your own fear in front of your children. "It is scary that so many people are sick but the news doesn't talk about the fact that everyone else is doing fine, or all the people who are only a little sick. We have a good plan and other people looking out for us."

It is the sense of control that can be the source of future resilience. After this virus has run its course, not only will we have a greater herd immunity to the virus, we may also have greater herd immunity to the stress. And if we handle it properly, our children will, too.

Acknowledgement: Ned Johnson, March 2020

# ParentBrief



## How to manage parental stress and fatigue

In the cartoon above, the parents are looking at themselves in the mirror. It's not a pretty sight. Their stress, anxiety, and not wanting to face what they see, makes up the picture. When we look in the mirror, what do we see? Do we resemble these parents? Stress and fatigue go with the job of parenting, but enjoying our kids to the max will depend on how well we manage our tiredness and anxiety. Achieving a balance and restoring well-being may not be as tricky as we think...

### What we know about parent fatigue

In 2008, the Parenting Research Centre in Melbourne conducted a community-based survey\* of over 1400 parents of young children (0-6 years). The survey found that over 70% of parents reported that tiredness gets in the way of them being the parent they want to be. High levels of fatigue were found to be associated with showing affection, anger and frustration, and lack of involvement in kids' play and learning activities. High levels of fatigue were also associated with poor diet and exercise, ineffective coping strategies, lack of social support and poor sleep quality.

\* <http://www.parentingrc.org.au/index.php/impact-of-parental-fatigue-project-detail>

### Why did I let myself in for this?

We've all been there...or if we haven't, in all probability we will at some stage. The kids are being feral, the fridge is on the blink, restructure in the workplace is about to happen and the school is requesting an interview for Feral #2...again. No matter how well we plan our week, no matter how organised we think we are, no matter how much work and time we put into our parenting, Murphy's Law says 'if the trolley can go

off the rails, it will'. And when it does, there's usually great urgency to get it back on track.

Parenting doesn't come with a manual and no two kids are the same. Put simply, this means that we've got to do the best we know how, but differently, for the sake of each child. Working full or part time whilst simultaneously running a family is a big ask, and the stressors can be huge and constant. We're not robots nor are we super-human (even though our kids might think so). To keep the show on the road, we might need to expand our parenting toolbox and put some additional management strategies in place.

### Ways to manage fatigue and stress

**Cut some slack** – nowhere is it written that we have to be perfect parents. Let's get over the notion that we must somehow be infallible.

**Don't do disempowered or defeated** - it's too easy to feel that we're fast losing ground and that the situation is out of our control. Take one step at a time. If it's a discipline issue, that's led to other issues, then tackle discipline first for other solutions to follow.

**Prioritise exercise** – there's no better way to improve your mood than to work out. Exercise is an effective diversion from stress and anxiety. Grab the dog and do that walk. Happy pets have a way of enhancing mental health.

**Eat healthy** – fast foods, take away, and packaged snacks are 'sometimes' foods. Fresh food and a balanced diet works wonders and is usually cheaper in the long run than packaged meals. Give the body the fuel it needs.

**Support team** –make a list of family, friends, neighbours...anyone we trust to be with our kids...so that when the plot looks like being comprehensively lost, we can call on someone on our team to step in and give us a much needed break. It may only be half an hour for a walk around the block, or an hour for a coffee, or even a date with ourselves, away from our partner.

**Create calm** –work towards positive interactions, family discussions, rules, boundaries, shared parental and domestic responsibilities, and a quiet retreat somewhere in the house where any family member can go for time out.

**Do family** – spend time together as a couple, or as a family. Watch a video, walk together, go shopping together, enjoy activities and interests either separately or together. Find that precious few hours to just chill. Try to keep the extracurricular activities to a minimum. Neither the kids nor us need to live in the car.

Finally, seek advice if needed. Only we know our limits, and we're usually the only one who knows when that limit has been reached. Professional advice is only a phone call away. We don't ever need to feel guilty making the call.

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