

6. Parent Information

What is the Peer Support program?

The Peer Support program provides students with a supportive environment where children and young people develop skills, understandings, attitudes and strategies to improve their mental, social and emotional wellbeing. Positive relationships are developed across the school through a series of engaging activities with a range of students of all ages. The program enables participating students to contribute in an environment where all can join in. Those students helping to lead the program also gain leadership skills.

How does Peer Support work?

Our students will meet in small, mixed level groups every week for 8 weeks. Sessions will run for about 40 minutes using materials from Peer Support Australia. Peer Support Australia's mission is to provide an evidence based, peer led approach to enhance the mental, social and emotional wellbeing of young people. Peer Support has trained our staff and our staff have trained our student Peer Leaders to run supervised sessions to develop protective factors and strengthen positive relationships across the school. Peer Leaders will work with small groups of students from K/P-Year 5. Using Peer Leaders means we have student role models who can help our staff and parents encourage positive relationships.

The Stronger Together module

The module builds on research from health promotion, prevention and positive psychology approaches.

The module covers the following topics:

- 🌀 Session 1 Feeling safe - Being me!
- 🌀 Session 2 Strong me!
- 🌀 Session 3 Including others
- 🌀 Session 4 Make the change
- 🌀 Session 5 Know your rights
- 🌀 Session 6 Make a choice
- 🌀 Session 7 Standing together
- 🌀 Session 8 Take the lead!

The students identify their own strengths and then discuss what is respectful and what are unhealthy behaviours and how strategies, including talking to staff and parents can help. The module reinforces some of our schools key values and our policy and procedures.

Parent and family support

Bullying is defined in our sessions as unhelpful behaviour that is repeated and intends to cause harm and involves an unkind use of social or personal influence.

Parents might find the sessions are an opportunity for discussion with their child or children about how they feel about the relationships at school. Friendships and socialising with other students is a big area of learning for most children. They are an important key to enjoying school and learning. Parents asking about each session (even obtaining a copy of a more detailed outline) can help students think about the learning.

General points that may be useful

- 👁️ Acknowledge feeling safe and happy is important
- 👁️ Good relationships are a two way thing
- 👁️ Establish that bullying can be different to disagreeing with another person
- 👁️ Check out about school behaviour policies and procedures on enrolment or on the school website
- 👁️ Indicate that bullying is taken seriously by you
- 👁️ Reassure them of your support if they have experienced difficulty
- 👁️ Acknowledge your child's feelings if they feel they have been bullied
- 👁️ If they may have been involved in behaviour that has upset another child - talk about helpful behaviours, kindness and accepting differences
- 👁️ Stay calm, positive and focus on solutions with your child
- 👁️ Discuss options including talking to the school
- 👁️ Check any feeling that this might make the situation worse by having strategies in place
- 👁️ Contact the school about any questions you may have as soon as you can

Peer Support Australia provides reading and resources specifically for parents

Visit www.peersupport.edu.au and use the parent tab