

KOONDROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

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SOME ADVICE

The Queensland floods and the Victorian bushfires continue to wreak incredible havoc on so many people's lives and will no doubt leave an indelible imprint on our collective psyches. These two natural disasters will be brought into our living rooms via the media over the coming days and weeks.

As adults we all want our children to live carefree lives and keep them from the pain and even horror of tragedies such as natural disasters. In reality we can't do this.

So what is a parent, teacher, or other caring adult to do when the natural disasters fills the airwaves and the consciousness of society? Here are some ideas:

Reassure children that they are safe. The consistency of the images can be frightening for young children who don't understand the notion of distance and have difficulty distinguishing between reality and fiction. Let them know that while this event is indeed happening it will not affect them directly.

Be available and 'askable'. Let kids know that it is okay to talk about the unpleasant events. Listen to what they think and feel. By listening, you can find out if they have misunderstandings. You do not need to explain more than they are ready to hear, but be willing to answer their questions.

Help children process what they see and hear, particularly through television. Children are good observers but can be poor interpreters of events that are out of their level of understanding. Sit with them. Ask them questions to ascertain their understanding.

Support children's concerns for others. They may have genuine concerns for the suffering that will occur and they may need an outlet for those concerns. It is heart-warming to see this empathy in children for the concerns of others.

Let them explore feelings beyond fear. Many children may feel sad or even angry with these events so let them express the full range of emotions. They may feel sadder for the loss of wildlife, than for loss of human life, which is impersonal for them.

Help children and young people find a legitimate course of action if they wish. Action is a great antidote to stress and anxiety so finding simple ways to help; including donating some pocket money can assist kids to cope and teaches them to contribute.

Avoid keeping the television on all the time. The visual nature of the media means that images are repeated over and over, which can be both distressing to some and desensitizing to others.

In difficult times, it is worth remembering what adults and children need most are each other.

Thanks to Michael Grose for this advice.

What will happen at school this year?

Parent Information Night

We will be conducting an information night for parents on **Monday 23rd February from 6 pm to 7.30 pm**

Order of the night: Prep to 2 class ~ 6 pm,
Internet and computers ~ 6.30pm
Year 3-6 classes ~ 7 pm

Sessions will take the form of a brief talk by class teachers with time for questions. Sessions will run for about 20 minutes with a break of 10 minutes in between each.

Grade One Writing

On the holidays I went camping and I had an ice-cream. I hopped under the sprinkler.

By Sara

On the holidays I went to Holly's house. We played the Playstation and we played hide and seek.

By Sam

On Christmas Day we went to Nan's to have Christmas. It was fun. Nan gave me Dogs on Playstation 2. There is a dog called Tom. I got up to a hard bit. You have to get Tom something. Santa gave me a toy dog. It is soft.

By Holly

On the weekend I went to the Murray River. We jumped off trees.

By Josh

Murray Plains Cluster Swimming Sports

On Tuesday 24th February Koondrook PS will be hosting our cluster swimming sports at the Koondrook Swimming Pool. Children from years 2-6 at Gunbower, Leitchville, Welton and Koondrook will compete in length or width swimming in different strokes and age group relays. The non-swimmers will be involved in lots of novelty races in the middle sized pool. It is always an exciting day which requires lots of helpers. Parents and friends are needed to act as starting and finishing marshals, judges, life savers and recorders. If you are willing to give up your day to help in any way please let Sally Fyfield know as soon as possible.

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I am willing to help out at the Murray Plains Cluster swimming sports on Tuesday 24th February.

Name: _____

MARC Library News

Welcome to all our preps and any new children to our area. Could children please bring a library bag on library day & could parents please reinforce a safe place to put library books at home. I usually ask children to put their books up out of reach of young children, the dog and in the same place each week so that they know where they are ready for the next library day. Our prep children will start borrowing one book to start with and once we get them into the routine of returning them and choosing another, then they will be able to borrow up to 3 books per week.

Our theme on Space will commence shortly, as soon as we have our workbooks organised, a title page for the start of this year's library work and revise how we use and care for our library & books.

Children are encouraged to borrow every week, to take their books home to browse and read & share with you.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- 13th February- Casual Dress Day Appeal
- 16th February- Kerang Zone Swimming Trials
- 20th February- Assembly, hosted by 3-6
- 23rd February- Mallee Zone Swimming
- 23rd February- Parent Information Night
- 24th February- Cluster Swimming Sports @ Koondrook
- 9th March- Labour Day School Holiday
- 23rd March-Medieval Performance @ Leitchville PS
- 1st April- Grandparents' Day
- 3rd April- ScienceTwists Day @ school. **Last day of Term 1**
- 20th April- **Term 2 commences**
- 27th-30th April- 5/6 URBAN CAMP
- 21st/22nd July 3/4 Sleepover

Bushfire Appeal Help

We have been touched by the compassion demonstrated by our students wanting to donate goods to those affected by the bushfires. We have been in contact with the Red Cross and they advise the response by well meaning communities across Australia has been fantastic, to the point of overwhelming. The current request is for financial assistance only, at this point of time.

Red Cross, Bendigo will contact us when they establish what else is required. We will keep you informed.



We have best borrowers at the end of each term and children do receive an award if they have remembered their library books every library day for the term.

Term 1, our best borrowers will choose something useful from the treasure box.

I look forward to sharing some great books with your children during 2009! Happy reading.

Glenda Charlton-White.

Book Club Orders

Orders went home with the children last week. These are due back on the 17th February

Medical Information

What a fantastic response. We had all but one form back on the Friday! Thank you for your cooperation.

School Fees

The fees for the 2009 school year are now due. The total amount is \$110.50.

\$70.00 of this goes towards the cost of materials for Art and Library and the balance of \$40.50 goes towards each child's class materials (books, pencils, etc.)

If you feel you may have difficulty paying the fees please contact the office and we can discuss the matter.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Parents holding a Commonwealth Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card that is valid from 28th January 2009 are eligible to claim Education Maintenance Allowance.

Health Care Cards must be sighted by Jennie or Judi on application. A claim form is attached.

All claims must be returned before 25th February. The Department of Education will **NOT** accept claims after this date.

LATE NEWS

I have just been informed; DEECD has requested all schools have a Casual Dress Day Appeal on Friday 13th February. In exchange students are asked to bring a gold coin donation which will go towards the Bushfire Appeal.

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