

Raise

RAISE THE CHILD CHANGE THE WORLD



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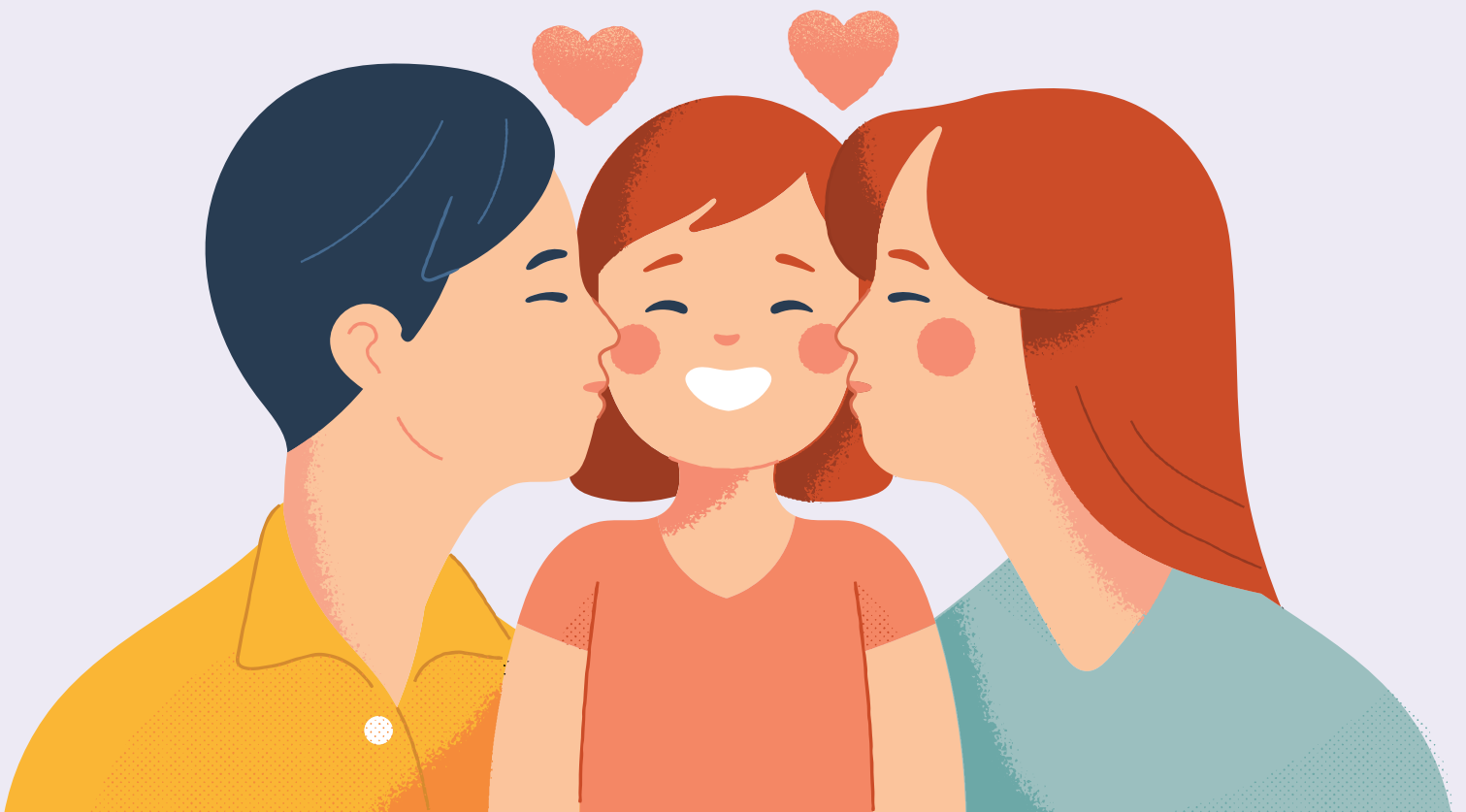
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"This moment in history is
'a time to choose what matters
in life and what passes away,
a time to separate what is
necessary from what is not.
It is a time to get our lives
back on track
with regard to you, Lord,
and to others'."

| POPE FRANCIS



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In this uncertain time in the world, we have produced a weekly, digital special edition of Raise magazine, which aims to support families during this time of learning from home.

In each issue, we will cover topics such as tips for learning at home, caring for your mental health, where to turn for further support, ideas to keep the family active and feel-good pieces to inspire and motivate.



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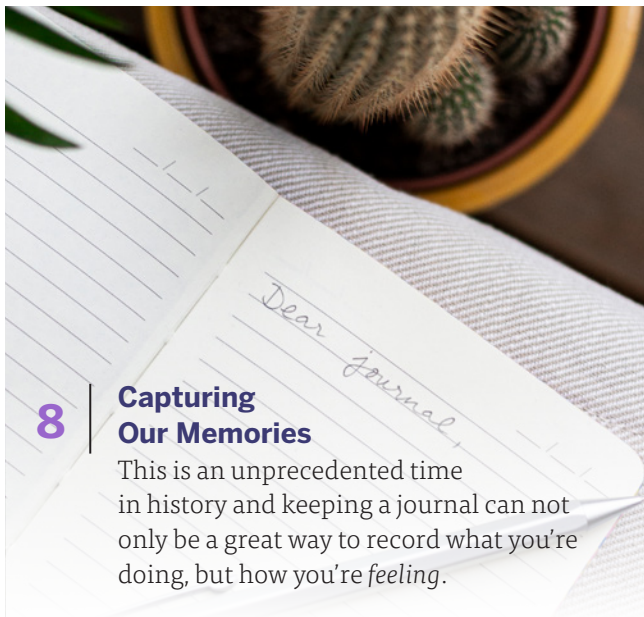
You may be concerned about your child falling behind, but there are endless learning opportunities in the home environment.

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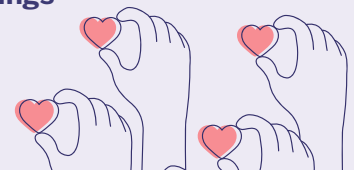


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Incidental Learning in the Home

Concerned about your child falling behind? Kids are constantly learning in their everyday exchanges with you.

ANDREW MCKENZIE

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If you are starting to despair as to what your child is or isn't learning at home during our current hibernation – don't. You may be pleasantly surprised at how much your child is learning or has learned in these different times, it's just that it's happening in a different way.

“No less than the Queensland College of Teachers has identified that children learn when they spend quality time with their parents – learning happens all the time at home but in a different way to school-based learning.”

Take reading for example. If you read to your child – a book, a newspaper, a takeaway menu – or they read to you, that's great. Even better if you can start a conversation around it – what's your favourite character and why, or what's your favourite pizza and why don't you like anchovies?

What's your favourite character in *Hairy Maclary* (the “Noo Zulland” dog from Donaldson's *Dairy*)? For mine it's Schnitzel von Krumm “with a very low tum”. Why? Because he keeps his ear (both of them in fact) to the ground. Bitzer Maloney “all skinny and bony” comes close – got to love an underdog, although perhaps Schnitzel is the classic underdog? Years after we first introduced our kids to that classic children's book by Lynley Dodd we're still talking about that cast of misfit dogs.

Maths is a bit different. You may not get far engaging your child about why they love maths but you will hook them in with a mathematical game or puzzle. About how many litres are there in the swimming pool and what would it weigh? How could we work out our car's fuel consumption? How much pasta do we need to cook for four people?

Finding ways to use maths in everyday life and applying it in useful ways makes it relevant and fun and these are absolute prerequisites for learning to occur. You will be demonstrating ways in which maths is useful and your kids might be able to demonstrate what they have been taught at school that allows them to nut out the problem.

“No-one is asking parents to be teachers in the current crisis but that doesn't mean parents can't teach their kids lots of interesting stuff. Chances are you are already doing it.”

Andrew is the Cairns Catholic Education Manager – Governance and Engagement.

The research summarised in this article comes for the Queensland College of Teachers Research Digest No10 (Nov, 2014).



HOW SCHOOLS CAN HELP

- Contact your child's teacher or talk to the principal if you're concerned about your child falling behind. Your child's teacher and school are there to support you and your family through this time.
- Schools have a plan in place to transition back to normal schooling. Follow the official updates from your child's school to stay informed.
- Each school will have plans in place to support students who may need additional assistance. Speak to your child's teacher or principal if you believe further support may be needed.

10 Tips to Keep Your Kids Active

Families are spending more time at home, which can lead to more time lazing on the lounge or sitting at a desk. The World Health Organisation recommends kids aged 5–17 should be doing at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily. Here are 10 quick tips to get them moving!



- 2.** Your kids may have been part of team sports before the COVID-19 crisis and they may be missing their mates and their favourite sports. Families could try playing a family game of soccer, shooting some hoops together or even throwing a frisbee.

- 1.** You could start a new family routine of all getting out of house in the afternoon to walk the dog or ride your bikes around your local area. The fresh air, exercise and change of scenery will be good for everyone's mood and mindset. Just be mindful to abide by the most recent government restrictions.



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- 3.** Kids generally love getting outdoors and getting messy, so involve them in the gardening. Collect veggies for dinner, water the pot plants, tidy up the garden beds, plant herbs or tend to worm farms.



- 4.** Water play is fun way to move and cool down in our tropical climate. Jump in the pool, turn on the sprinklers (check your local council's website for up-to-date water restrictions), splash under the hose or chase each other with water pistols.



- 5.** Understanding your child's temperament and interests will help determine what kind of physical activity they would be comfortable doing. If your child loves TV or computer games, you could incorporate technology into their activity by purchasing interactive video games or YouTube videos that require them to move.



Active in Isolation



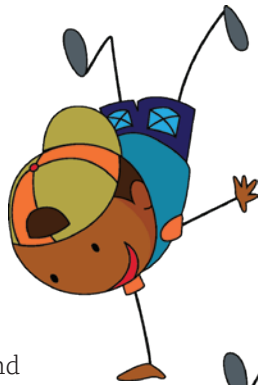
- 10.** Pick up a skipping rope and get the family skipping. Have skipping competitions to see who can last the longest. Or get a long rope, tie one end to a chair while you swing the other side and let the kids practise jumping in and out.



- 9.** It can feel liberating to dance like no one is watching, so turn on the tunes and have a dance party at home to burn off some energy. High school kids may be less inclined to join in, but younger kids will love being silly with their parents!



- 6.** If you used to go to the gym to workout, try doing it at home and getting the kids involved. They'll love mimicking you or adding extra weight to your workout. Older kids may want to train with you or you can encourage them to get active with their friends in a virtual workout. There are plenty of local gyms and fitness centres offering online classes and workouts, too.



- 8.** While we're spending more time in our homes, it's a great time to get creative and set up obstacle courses, play a game of charades or hide and seek. You could even create a chalk obstacle course on the footpath out the front for all neighbourhood kids to enjoy as they walk by.



- 7.** Remind yourself and the kids to step away from the devices or worksheets and move by setting a timer for every hour. No matter what the activity, when the timer goes off, get up, jump up and down, run around the backyard or do a little dance.



Capturing Our Memories

Last week in *Raise*, Sharon O’Keeffe invited everyone to start keeping a journal. This is a great way to not only capture what you have been doing, but how you are feeling.

RACHEL MCLEAN

By writing, drawing, making lists, creating collages, you are building a keepsake of memories that you will be able to return to in the weeks, months and years ahead. Not only is the product at the end of your efforts fantastic (think of the wisdom we have learnt from *The Diary of Anne Frank* and Nelson Mandela’s *Conversations with Myself*) but the process of keeping and reading back over a journal is really beneficial.

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I started capturing my memories when I was in Year 5. I was given a diary by my parents – one of those ‘old-school organisers’ that had a week over two pages. Each night I would write what had happened through the day, often in order from the time I got up to the time I went to bed. At the beginning it was easy to write every night, but, as the year went on, I would get tired or too busy and end up missing a couple of days. I would feel guilty that I had forgotten or missed things since the time I last wrote in the diary. So, instead of trying to remember all that I did, I started to write about how I was feeling.

“ By focussing less on what had happened, and more about how that made me feel, I moved from diary writing into journal writing. As I grew in confidence, I began to experiment. Instead of writing in narrative form, I would brainstorm my emotions and experiences.



I included drawings that friends had given me, quizzes from magazines, poems that made me cry, and recipes that I had made with my sisters. I came to understand, that while the events were important to record, what was more important, was how these events made me feel.”

There is a lot of research that shows the benefits of journal writing, particularly during challenging times. 500 years ago, St Ignatius of Loyola wrote about the benefits of journalling, and more importantly, the impact of reading what you had written; he called it ‘time with your Listening Book.’ This process of journalling invites you to do more than just record, create and reflect; it invites you to listen to what you have created and learn from your own wisdom. Imagine if we all spent some time over the coming weeks and months, being creative and nurturing our own wisdom. We might emerge from coronavirus as courageous, peace-filled and forgiving as Anne Frank and Nelson Mandela. Wouldn’t the world be an amazing place then?

Rachel is the Cairns Catholic Education Leader Formation

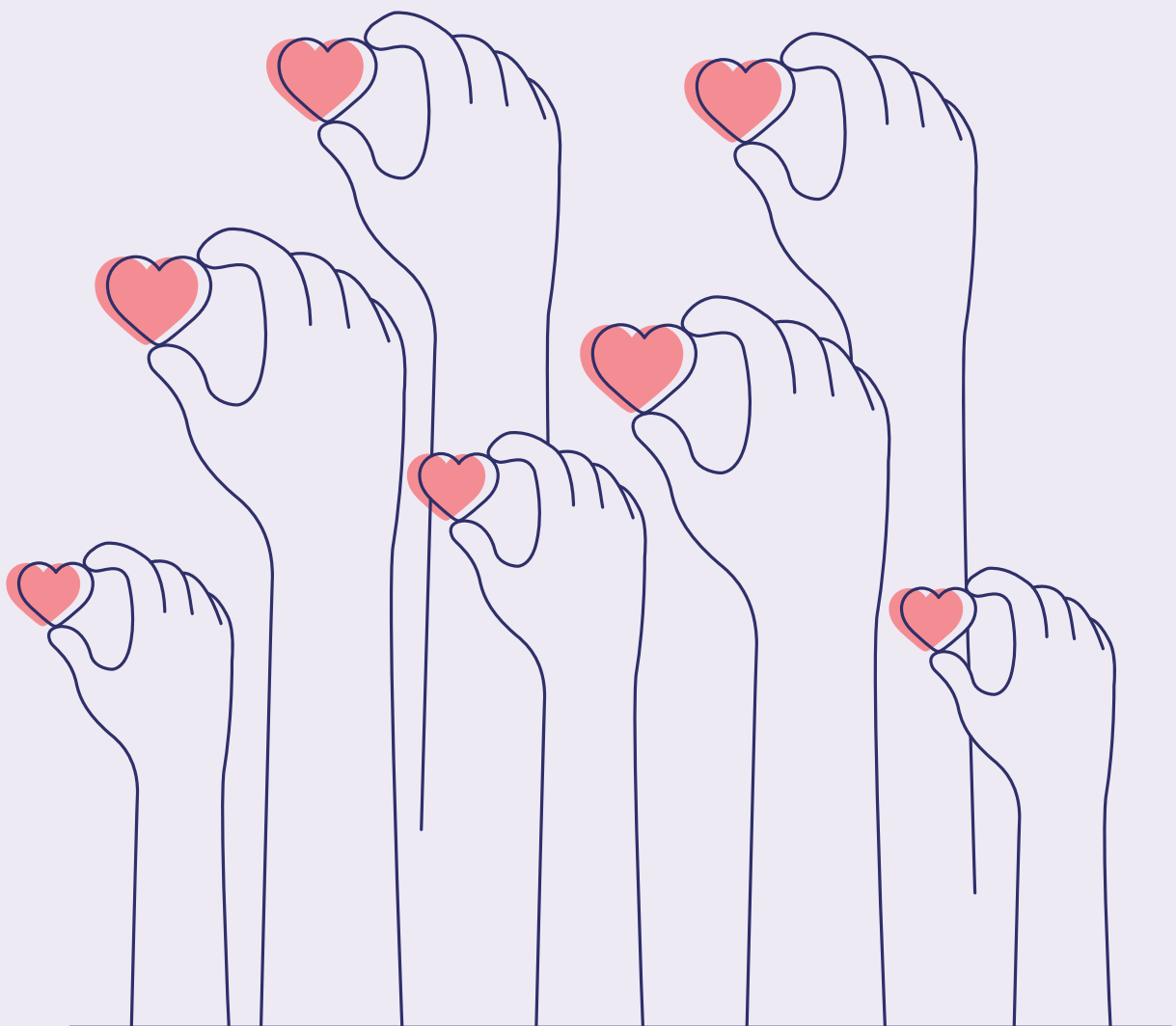




Dear Journal,

“The world has enough
for everyone’s need,
but not enough
for everyone’s greed.”

| GANDHI



SEARCHING FOR THE SILVER LININGS

STEPHANIE MEEKINGS

Everyone has been impacted in some way by COVID-19, but in varying degrees. While we may be all in this together, we're certainly not all in the same boat. Everyone's situation and circumstances are different. Everyone's support network and coping mechanisms are different. And while we ride out this storm, some may need a lifeline while others sail on through.

While we can't always change our circumstances, what we can do is look for some of the silver linings and positives that can come out of this situation - no matter how big or small.

SEEING GREEN

News reports are showing pollution and greenhouse gases have dropped and air quality has increased as the world retreats to wait out the pandemic in their homes. Families are growing their own veggies, starting worm farms and upcycling items for craft projects. While we wait out this pandemic, Earth is having a break and a chance to heal as well. You may find you're using your car less and therefore you're actively contributing to a reduction in pollution - and saving money on fuel at the same time.

STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE

It may not feel like it at the time, but this moment in history is teaching us and our children resilience. When our lives resume, we will personally and collectively have grown from this experience - even if it's just a feeling of "we made it".

SUPPORTING LOCALS

A lot of local business has suffered through this crisis, but now more than ever, locals are rallying together to support small and shop local when possible. This sense of supporting our Far North community and keeping small businesses afloat is something we can take beyond these uncertain times and be proud of.

While it may be a challenging time in our lives, I challenge you to look for the silver linings, look for the lessons, appreciate the things we took for granted in the past or find some positives in your current situation... even if you can't see them straight away.

Stephanie is a Cairns Catholic Education Digital Media Officer

ISOLATION IDEAS

You may have lost track of what week of isolation we are in or you may be running out of ideas to keep your kids entertained, engaged and happy at home. The kids may have felt it was a novelty to stay home at first, but as the weeks pass by they may be missing their mates or bouncing off the walls. Every child, family and situation are different, but we've come up with some ideas for isolation to inspire.

TRACE YOUR FAMILY TREE

Younger kids can draw or paint a tree and add family members to the branches and leaves, while older kids can research the family tree by talking to family members or researching online to see how far back they can trace the family tree. This can be a great activity to do as a family and is both interesting and educational.

TAKE A VIRTUAL EXCURSION

Tour a famous museum online, head to a virtual zoo or explore one of the many great Wonders of the World... from the comfort of your home. There are lots of local, national and international zoos and wildlife parks offering free virtual tours or wildlife talks for families at home. Likewise, museums and iconic locations around the world are open online and are an educational experience for kids and adults alike.

LEARN TO FIX IT

A lot of family homes have an item that needs fixing, a wall that needs painting or clothes that need mending. Get the kids involved and learn to sew on that missing button, paint the wall or assist in repairing the fence or missing handle on the saucepan.

For more ideas, check out [PakMag's Isolation Ideas](#) - an ultimate toolbox to keep families learning and laughing at home.



Spirited Schools



Learning from Home a Success at Saints

Students and staff at St Augustine's College, Parramatta Park were well prepared for learning from home when coronavirus temporarily changed the way education was being delivered in our schools. We spoke to Saints' Head of Science, Jesse Zell, about how the college was using Microsoft Teams prior to the pandemic, why the transition to learning from home went so well and what the response was like from the student community.

How were you and your team using Microsoft Teams prior to learning from home and how did this help prepare teachers and students for the transition?

I was introduced to Microsoft Teams about two years ago by the previous Director of Teaching and Learning. She did not really know what it was but had heard that it was a program with potential for learning in classrooms. When I had a play around with it, I could not believe the program was not more widely known. My staff agreed to use the discussion board as our department's main method of communication. Everything took off from there really.

How has the transition to learning from home gone?

By the time the coronavirus shutdown occurred, the Science Department already had Teams as the only system to interact digitally with students. There were several other teachers and departments around the school that also had a strong command of the program. Our Principal, Matthew Brennan, could see the value in using a single system and made the call to go with Teams in week 10. He organised a week of staff PD with all the confident Teams users directing small groups.

I would not want to sugar coat things too much. Kids learning in front of a computer all day is not ideal. There were also plenty of teething issues learning the intricacies of the program. The internet traffic and download speeds were another curve ball. But two weeks in and students and teachers were more settled. Every other day a staff member is running a PD on some helpful IT application, we have critical friends to share with and the networking between staff is something to behold. You would never in your wildest dreams imagine a school thriving amidst such a challenge.



Jesse Zell is the Head of Science at St Augustine's College, Parramatta Park.

How are the students responding to this different way of learning?

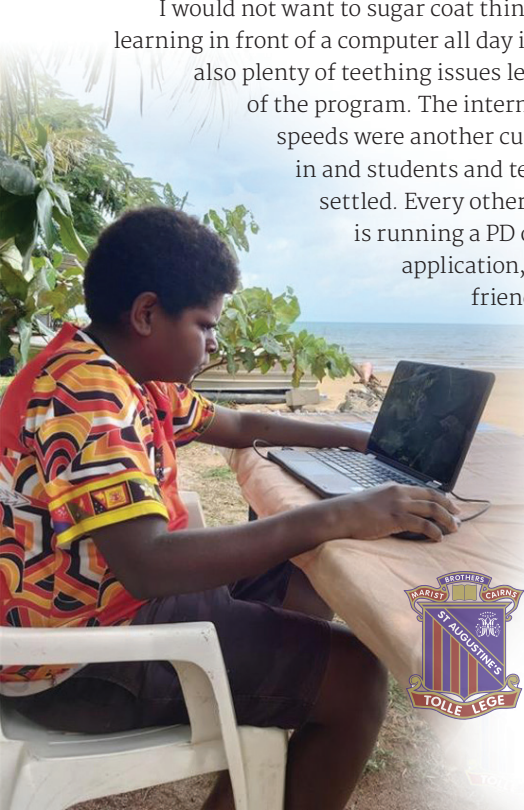
Young people have no problem learning a new program and they have taken to Teams like ducks to water. My own personal experience is that the kids are getting the work done. Like a normal teaching environment, there are some students that are excelling and others that need a bit more encouragement. Teams

has made tracking student progress very easy and they know that I am checking their work. There is also a lot of fun being had. You can imagine the playful banter going on in the chat rooms. Teams has stacks of emojis, stickers and other things that can liven up someone's day.

I was in the Principal's office yesterday and he showed me the results of a community survey. I was proud to see the feedback. Most responses from both parents and students alike were supportive. They recognised the great job Saints teachers are doing and appreciate the continuity of learning their sons are getting against the odds.

How do you think this experience will shape the future?

This will be over soon, and it will be back to the classroom. I may even get a bit nervous having to stand up in front of a large group. I am sure some of the practices that we get out of this fantastical experience will remain. It will be very interesting to see how the education landscape changes in the long term. One thing is certain, everyone will have a new appreciation of IT.



LEFT: St Augustine's College boarding student Cyril Ghee learning from his home on Darnley Island in week one.



Catholic Education
Diocese of Cairns

Learning with Faith and Vision



Mossman School Supporting Student Wellbeing

While students are learning from home, Mossman's St Augustine's School is supporting their students both academically and emotionally through an at-home wellbeing program.

St Augustine's School, Mossman has been running a world-first, whole school wellbeing program, 'Kichido - The Path of Positivity', since early 2019. The program includes a mindfulness-based, slow, rhythmic and integrated breathing, movement and relaxation technique that teaches the foundation skills of being grounded, centred and present. Prior to the coronavirus pandemic, the entire school started their day together participating in the breathing practice, which set the tone for the day.

"At St Augustine's we have been doing Kichido daily from Term 1 2019 right up until the COVID-19 restrictions came in. The Year 6 Kichido leaders had taken ownership of the program and by the time the school bell rang, they had things set up ready to go. They would stand in the middle and model to the whole school community," explains Kerrilee Beaumont, School Counsellor at St Augustine's School, Mossman.

When the school transitioned to learning from home in Term 2 this year, the daily routine of starting the morning all together in mindfulness was suspended, however Kerrilee discovered students were still practising themselves at home.

"I had heard that students and families were still doing Kichido at home during COVID-19 and knowing routine is really important during this time I thought it might be helpful to have a video to use as a guide. This way the whole family can do the practice together at home," explains Kerrilee.

"I also thought it would be a great resource for the parents, grandparents and carers who don't get to stay and join us in the mornings and is something that can benefit everybody's mental health in an easy positive way."

Kerrilee, with the assistance of colleagues Gayle Duncan and Sharon Miller, filmed the Kichido routine to help support wellbeing and maintain a sense of normality for the primary students and their families.

"Supporting parents, carers and students with support for their wellbeing is vital as they grapple with the roles and different situations they find themselves in. If we can put as much effort into positive mental health and wellbeing as we do into learning it is my belief that our society will become way more resilient and recover better when life does return to 'normal'."

The benefits of Kichido

"We love Kichido at St Augustine's because it is a trauma sensitive program - it can be adapted and altered to suit our students, our school, our community. Kichido is not prescriptive so will look different in each setting. Once you've completed the initial two-day training and have the four foundational skills you can bring Kichido to your school, workplace, or home and adapt to suit. It doesn't take long either. In under 10 minutes, we have taken around 25 conscious breaths so that when we head to class, we have set the brain up for optimal learning. Kichido is very similar to practices like Qigong and Tai Chi, and research indicates that the slow meditative process of these contemplative practices have a huge array of benefits including improved cognitive function, better balance, and we are able to switch on the body's relaxation response thus reducing stress. Who doesn't want that!"



Students at St Augustine's School, Mossman practising Kichido together prior to the COVID-19 restrictions.

“Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today”

| MALCOLM X



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