



**OUR SCHOOL VALUES: RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, HONESTY & TRUST,
CARE & COMPASSION, PERSONAL BEST AND TEAM WORK**

Hello to our Community

Moving into Week 2 and we are starting to hit our strides. Positive adjustments have been made and we managed our first successful pick up and drop off of student learning tasks. Thank you to those who have supported our processes with flexibility and enthusiasm. We are working hard to ensure we maintain safety and accountability to both the Minister's and Department of Education directives.

Staff have been making regular and ongoing contact with families and have made many attempts to be supportive with student learning. Feedback remains positive and extremely appreciative in most cases. A few staff have been asked to step in and manage student behaviour at home but that is not a reasonable request. Staff have limited time to communicate with students / parents and classes, respond to emails, plan future program activities and correct work that has been returned via the home learning books. Please don't expect staff to take on the management of children not making the right choice at home. If you find that you need some wellbeing support send an email through to the classroom teacher and they will redirect this through to the relevant person who will then get in touch with you. I ask that you keep in mind that emails cannot always be answered immediately. Give the teacher at least 24 hours to respond to your communication request and remember you are one of 25 within a group.

I was taking some time recently to reflect on how people manage change and the strategies or feelings they may present when faced with new processes and procedures. We have been on the end of some difficult conversations lately where we have not been able to satisfy a request or agree to disagree over an issue. This is difficult for staff and leadership, purely because our intention is one of integrity and transparency. We all appreciate that everyone has a perception on how they want things to happen or why things should be better, but we ask that you remember we are mandated to follow strict Ministerial guidelines and these are non negotiables.

I have no doubt that you have run into family and friends who have thought differently to you, particularly in regards to Remote Learning and Stage 3 isolation. There is a range of 7 behaviours that people may exhibit when there is a change to be enacted upon. Like most things, there is a spectrum of these emotions and possible feelings people may emit at different times. By understanding the range of people's feelings, it may help us all access empathy and compassion. Take a look and see where you, or others you know, might be sitting. Remember you are the only person who is able to move yourself from one feeling to another or act to change your thinking. You may not be in control of the larger situation, but you are certainly in control of your actions, words and behaviour.

- 1. Anxiety / Self Doubt:** Can I cope?, I don't think I can do this?, This is terrible and it's not working
- 2. Fear:** I'm really scared and worried, What impact will this change have on me?, What if I can't do this?
- 3. Threat:** Is this change bigger than I thought?, How long will this last?, My life, work, home has been impacted
- 4. Disillusionment:** This change is just not for me, time to move on, I've had enough of this, I'm over it, I'm not following this any more
- 5. Acceptance:** Maybe this change won't be so bad?, It's starting to get a little easier, I think I'm actually learning some new skills / building stronger relationships
- 6. Happiness:** At least processes are in place and things are happening, I'm enjoying the opportunity to reconnect with my family, I'm grateful for what I have
- 7. Excitement:** I am really looking forward to this, I can't wait to try this new learning / process, I have learnt so many new things

Thank you again to everyone for an extremely wonderful week. Please take care of yourselves, be kind and stay safe.

Cheers, Chris

5 Ways Parents Can Motivate Children at Home During the Pandemic – Without Nagging or Tantrums!

Parents have always helped with homework and made sure their children fulfill responsibilities like chores, but the extended and often unstructured time families are spending together during the current crisis creates new challenges.

After a disaster like a hurricane or fire, establishing structure is important to keep consistency and maintain a sense of control for both parents and children. This includes creating a schedule and communicating clear expectations and guidelines on things such as screen time.

But how do parents get children to follow the schedule and fulfill responsibilities without nagging and in a way that prevents blowups and tantrums?

Wendy Grolnick, a psychologist and parenting expert who has worked with parents in disaster situations, has studied how parents can help children become more self-motivated and decrease conflict in the family. In this piece, she shares some strategies to make the house run more smoothly during the coronavirus crisis.

1. Involve children in setting schedules

When children participate in creating guidelines and schedules, they are more likely to believe the guidelines are important, accept them and follow them.

To involve children, parents can set up a family meeting. At the meeting, parents can discuss the schedule and ask children for their input on decisions like what time everyone should be out of bed and dressed, when breaks from schoolwork would work best and where each family member should be during study time.

Not every idea will be feasible – children may feel being dressed by noon is fine! But when parents listen to a child's ideas, it helps them own their behavior and be more engaged in what they are doing.

There may well be differences in opinion. Parents can negotiate with their children so that at least some of the children's ideas are adopted. Resolving conflicts is an important skill for children to learn, and they learn it best from their parents.

2. Allow children some choice

Schoolwork has to be done and chores need to be completed, but having some choice about how they are accomplished can help children feel less pressured and coerced, which undermines their motivation.

Parents can present some chores around the house, and children can choose which they prefer. They can also pick when or how they complete them – do they want to do the dishes before or after watching their TV show?

Parents can also give children choice about what fun activity they would like to do at the end of the day or for a study break.

3. Listen and provide empathy

Children will be more open to hearing about what they need to do if they feel that their own perspectives are understood. Parents can let children know that they understand, for example, that it is not fun to be in the house and that they miss being with their friends.

Parents can begin requests with an empathetic statement. For example, "I know it seems like getting dressed is silly because we're in the house. But getting dressed is part of the routine we have all decided upon." Even if they might not agree with their child's perspective, when parents show that they understand, cooperation is enhanced, as is the parent-child relationship.

4. Provide reasons for rules

When parents provide reasons for why they are asking for something, children can better understand the importance of acting in particular ways. Reasons will be most effective when they are meaningful to the children in terms of the children's own goals. For example, a parent can say that dividing family chores will help everyone have more time for fun activities after dinner.

5. Problem-solve together

Not everything will go according to plan – there will be times of frustration, nagging and yelling. When things are not working out, parents can try engaging in joint problem solving with their children, which means employing empathy, identifying the issue and finding ways to resolve it.

For example, a parent might state, "You know how I've been nagging you to get up in the morning? It is probably really annoying to hear that first thing in the morning. The problem is that even though we decided we would all get up at 8 a.m., you are not getting out of bed. Let us put our heads together to see what we can do to make morning time go more smoothly. What are your ideas?" I have seen this take the stress out of mornings for working parents who need to take their children to school before going to work, and I believe it could help during the pandemic, too.

All of these practices can help children to feel more ownership of their behavior. That will make them more likely to cooperate.

However, these strategies require time and patience – something that is hard to come by at times of stress. Research studies show that parents are more likely to yell, demand and threaten when time is limited, they are stressed or they feel worried about how their children are performing. That is why it is important for parents to find time for their own self-care and rejuvenation – whether it be by taking a walk, exercising, meditating or writing in a journal. A pandemic or other disaster presents challenges for parents, but using motivational strategies can help parents provide a calmer and more effective environment that also facilitates a positive parent-child relationship.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR SCHOOL COUNCIL PRESIDENT....

Hello MPHPS Community

As we all face these unfamiliar times in our life, it is time to reflect on the positives, see our unity and don't see the emptiness.

The stronger we all are today, the sooner we'll welcome tomorrow.

As a parent myself, I agree it's not easy and I have had to make changes. Was I scared and unsure about home learning - absolutely!!! I was and my respect for the staff that run our school on a day to day basis has gone to another level – our teachers are doing an amazing job!!

Our (Acting) Principal, Chris, has contacted me personally on what's going on during these hard times so I thought I'd put something small together to share.

Congratulations to everyone involved at MPHPS during these unfamiliar times and the countless hours you have all put in.

It's really important that we support our teachers as they are in the same boat as us. Send them an email with concerns, however think of them as well - show your support.

I'd like to share my personal story with everyone regarding Home Learning. I asked my 3 girls to give me a rundown of that they do on a day to day basis at school and I scaled it down (trying my best anyway).

Every morning I do a roll call which makes the girls smile. We do some independent reading, go for walks, snacks in between, play in the back yard, more eating 😊! Homework activities, bike rides around the lake as our PE lesson and follow what the teachers have asked to do at our own pace (no rush) and it works! Yes it has its ups and downs, but we get there by the end of each day.

I truly believe there is no right or wrong way for us parents/helpers to guide our kids during these hard times. Just be yourself and let the kids be kids!

I was truly amazed by my kids with the way they have conducted themselves and helped me guide them to make this work for all of us. Yes it's slowly working and yes it's not easy!!

We all need to be as calm as possible so no-one stresses out as our health is paramount.

After all this is over (hopefully sooner than later) we'll all be able to share our own experiences in the school grounds.

If I can assist any of you in my role as School Council President, please contact me at tanevski.peter.p@edumail.vic.gov.au and I would be happy to have a chat.

We are in this Together!

Peter Tanevski
School Council President
Mill Park Heights Primary School



**WE ARE
STRONGER
WHEN WE COME
TOGETHER**



Stay Tuned:
**Information about Mothers' Day Online
Gift Sale on Compass coming soon!**

