

Child Safety Newsletter

Vol 2: Term 2 2021

Commitment to Child Safety:

Mary MacKillop Catholic Regional College commits to providing a safe and nurturing culture for all children and young people in its care by:

1. Upholding our highest priority for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
2. Empowering families, children, young people and staff to have a voice and raise concerns.
3. Implementing rigorous risk- management and employment practices.

Dear Parents, Guardians & Students,

This is the second of our special quarterly newsletter to help support child protection and child safety. Mary MacKillop Catholic Regional College is committed to maintaining and continuously improving the safety of every child and young adult in our care.

Recent media coverage has highlighted that issues of sexual harassment and even assault are of concern throughout communities all over Australia, even in the national parliament. The need for comprehensive education around respectful relationships and the concept of informed consent has been recognised in all sectors of society. We locate this within our foundational Catholic philosophy: that every child is made in the image and likeness of God, and therefore possesses an innate human dignity which must be respected at all times. Our programs will aim to affirm each young person's self-respect and sense of self-worth, and from this encourage respect towards others.

We commit ourselves to working to make the College not just child safe, but to further improve our culture of child safety over time. Everyone has an obligation to contribute to being a child safe organisation. This includes leadership, staff, parents, volunteers and anyone else who may come into contact with children in our care. Practices and policies within the College have child safety as an integral component in all that we do. Students need to be empowered and to have a regular voice, not just about their safety, but as part of normal practice, so that they develop the skills and confidence to advocate for themselves or others. This is consistent with the broader goals of the College, to develop young adults who will in turn contribute to society and their communities.

Parents have a key role to play as well, which is a main objective of this newsletter. By working together, we can all play our part in keeping our children safe and nurturing their growth into successful, capable adults. We hope that this newsletter is the start of many productive conversations.

Yours sincerely,

David Leslie
Principal.

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College Child Protection Officers

Mary MacKillop Catholic Regional College has appointed the people listed below as the College's Child Protection Officers. Each Child Protection Officer is available to answer any questions that you may have with respect to our Child Protection and Safety Policy and the Child Protection Program.

Child Protection Officers roles within the College are voluntary. However each persons:

- attitudes, experiences and beliefs, for example, a person who is non-judgmental, calm, resilient and demonstrates a high degree of integrity and respect for confidentiality;
- role within the College, for example, a person who has seniority and experience working with complex student and family issues at the College and someone who is readily accessible and available to all members of the College community; and
- profile within the College, for example, a person who is approachable, who students and staff trust and who is willing and able to respond to issues personally and sensitively.

It is every individual's responsibility to protect children and make reports regarding their concerns to the appropriate authorities.

If a person requires support in reporting to the authorities, the College's Child Protection Officers are your first point of contact. They receive special training that allows them to deal with child protection concerns both sensitively and effectively.

If you have any concern that a child may be experiencing any form of abuse, whether or not you have formed a belief on reasonable grounds that the abuse has occurred, you can discuss your concerns with the College's Child Protection Officer. Please note that only raising concerns with the College's Child Protection Officer, does not meet your legal obligations to report suspected child abuse.

The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount. Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000.

The following Child Safety Officers can be contacted through the College on 5662 4255

- David Leslie - College Principal
- Kieran O'Dwyer - Deputy Principal Wellbeing and Organisation
- Bron Croatto - Senior School Director
- Cade Maskell - Senior School Wellbeing Coordinator
- Gerard Gordon - Middle School Director
- Richard Ogilvie - Middle School Wellbeing Coordinator
- Sarah Roscoe Smith - Assistant Middle School Wellbeing Coordinator
- Chris Spencer - Junior School Director
- Georgia Townley - Junior School Wellbeing Coordinator
- Claire Cassidy - Transition Coordinator
- Rhiannon LE Busque - College Counsellor
- Laura Muranty - Teacher and Year 8 Homeroom Teacher
- Stephen Ross Bryant - Teacher and Year 10 Homeroom Teacher
- Jenny Damon - Compliance Officer

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Personal safety and your child - Talking to your child about Safety

As your child gets older, they become increasingly independent and may spend time away from you or with a babysitter/ carer. As part of the journey of growing up, it's important to speak to your child about being safe. Let them know:

Tip 1 - It's OK to say NO if they think what they're being asked to do is or feels wrong.

Tip 2 - If they feel they're in danger, it's OK to yell, scream, kick or run to a safe place that you and your child have both agreed on - such as a neighbour or friend.

Tip 3 - Make sure that you tell your child that you would never send a stranger to pick them up.

Tip 4 - They can tell a lie, even to an adult, if they need to get away from someone who makes them feel unsafe.

Tip 5 - To use a 'code' word you both have as an example, using your first name when talking to you on the phone.

Tip 6 - Their body is their own - once a child no longer needs nappies to be changed or help with toileting, a carer or any other person should not touch their private areas.

Tip 7 - To tell you or another adult if they have any problems or if someone is making them feel unsafe.

Tip 8 - A babysitter or any other adult should not ask a child to keep a secret.

Tip 9 - Not to give out personal information online, including their school, suburb, sporting team or nicknames and to never meet someone they have met online in person.

When deciding if your child is old or mature enough to stay home alone, it's useful to consider the following questions:

Tip 1 - Do they feel comfortable and confident about being left alone?

Tip 2 - Can they use the telephone?

Tip 3 - Do they know how to keep themselves safe? For example, do they know not to answer the door or not to swim in the pool?

Tip 4 - Are they mature enough to handle any problems that might arise like a fire or injury?

Tip 5 - Do they have any illnesses, such as asthma, that may make it unsafe for them to be alone?

Tip 6 - Do they know appropriate adults in your local area who they can contact for help?

Tip 7 Do they know how to access emergency services by ringing 000?

Tip 8 - How long will you be away? There is a big difference between you going to the shop for a few minutes and being gone for several hours.

Tip 9 - Who else is in the house?

Commissioner for E-Safety
www.esafety.gov.au

Kids Helpline
<https://kidshelpline.com.au>



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Speak Up - Its your right!

Why the standards came about

In 2013, the Victorian Government looked at how safe organisations are for children and young people.

It found that sometimes children and young people have not been kept safe by organisations and the adults who work in them.

More needed to be done to keep children and young people safe in the future.

What are they for?

Out of home care providers, schools, churches, sports clubs, dance schools and other organisations have to keep you safe.

This means:

- Only choosing adults who are safe to work with you.
- Listening to you about what makes you feel safe.
- Acting to protect you if someone hurts you or makes you feel unsafe.

What does this mean for you?

- You can expect to be safe and to feel safe, wherever you go and whatever you do.
- You can expect that adults that work with you know how to keep you safe.
- You can tell an adult if you don't feel safe and they have to help you.

Is your child safe?

Questions to ask organisations about child safety.

1. Are your staff/volunteers screened, background checked and child safe trained?

Organisations need to have processes in place for employing the staff and volunteers who are looking after your children.

2. Do you have a child safe policy and code of conduct?

A child safe policy is the organisations commitment to children's safety. The code of conduct outlines the expected behaviour for those looking after children. The College code of conduct can be found on the College Website.

3. How do you go about including children in your decision making processes?

Children need to be given a voice in the organisation especially in the area of their own safety

4. How and where do you store my data?

Storing data is critical and this includes photographs of your child. Its important that you know where and how they store this data

5. How does a child make a complaint and what is your process for responding?

Children need to know how to make a complaint. If they notice an unsafe practice or they feel uncomfortable or unsafe around a staff member or volunteer they need to know who to tell.



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Child Safety Policy - Children's Speak

Student Safety

The following points are important for all students at Mary MacKillop Catholic Regional College:

- Everyone has the right to **FEEL** and **BE SAFE**.
- We all need to make sure that our school is **SAFE, SUPPORTIVE, INCLUSIVE** and **EMPOWERING**.
- When a student is unsafe (physically or mentally) it is **IMPORTANT** to seek help from a trusted adult.
- **ALL STAFF AND STUDENTS** are responsible for Student Safety and Wellbeing.
- Mr Leslie and Mr O'Dwyer make sure that **ALL STAFF** understand their responsibility to keep students **SAFE**.
- **ALL STAFF** work with families to give students the best education possible.

Student Participation

ALL STUDENTS need to help each other and staff make the school a **SAFE** place for **ALL**.

Students are aware of how and who they can report too, if they feel **UNSAFE**.

Reporting and Responding

When a student **FEELS UNSAFE** or is **WORRIED** about another student or themselves, they can talk to **ANY STAFF** member.

HELP is always available.

Students can **TALK WITH:**

- David Leslie - College Principal
- Kieran O'Dwyer - Deputy Principal Wellbeing and Organisation
- Bron Croatto - Senior School Director
- Cade Maskell - Senior School Wellbeing Coordinator
- Gerard Gordon - Middle School Director
- Richard Ogilvie - Middle School Wellbeing Coordinator
- Sarah Roscoe Smith - Assistant Middle School Wellbeing Coordinator
- Chris Spencer - Junior School Director
- Georgia Townley - Junior School Wellbeing Coordinator
- Claire Cassidy - Transition Coordinator
- Rhiannon LE Busque - College Counsellor
- Laura Muranty - Teacher and Year 8 Homeroom Teacher
- Stephen Ross Bryant - Teacher and Year 10 Homeroom Teacher
- Jenny Damon - Compliance Officer

HELP is also available at:

Phone

- 000 - Triple Zero: Emergency Helpline (Police, Ambulance, Fire)
- 1800 55 1800: Kids Helpline

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**We commit, to
positive behaviour,
safe and respectful
relationships.**