

First edition
of Wellbeing
& Inclusion
News

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W.I. NEWS



What we do in Wellbeing

We provide individual counseling and support to any student in need by appointment, we also help families with referrals and support. We assist students with basic welfare needs such as uniform and book items, refer students and families to specialised external support when required. We provide case management for students with ongoing issues and we complete educational assessments and provide reports and strategies based on the outcomes. We work closely with external agencies to offer the best opportunities and programs for our students to ensure they experience success with learning and school



Wellbeing Leader



I would like to introduce myself and let you know what we do in wellbeing. My name is Felicity Wooden and I started at ESC this year as the wellbeing leader. I have a **degree in youth affairs and further studies in Mental Health First Aid, Training and Assessment, Suicide prevention and postvention, Non Suicidal Self Injury, counselling, amongst others.** My last job was student wellbeing co-ordinator at a community school, a lot smaller than ESC but I am enjoying the challenges and advantages a large school has to offer. I work with an

amazing team here who give their all to the betterment of the school and its students, it is a pleasure to work with these dedicated people.

THE WELLBEING TEAM

Mike Jaremczuk (full time)	Assistant Principal leading Wellbeing
Tanya Ryder-Barnes (full time)	Inclusion / Wellbeing Leading Teacher
Felicity Wooden (full time)	Wellbeing Leader
Darryl Bridges (Tues, Wed, Thu)	Chaplain and Counsellor;
Naomi Dewar (Fridays)	Youth Worker
Greg Neville (Wednesdays)	Social Worker
Kate Lucas (Wednesdays)	Educational Psychologist
Robert Chatfield (Tues, Thu)	Child Psychologist

We also currently have 2 students on placement

Bec - is completing her diploma in counseling from Chisholm – She is here on Mondays, she provides supervised counseling and is going to be undertaking some group work in Term 3

Amanda - is completing her Masters in Educational Psychology at Melbourne University. She is here Wednesday and Thursdays. She will be working on observations, intervention programs and strategies to assist the whole school as well as completing supervised cognitive assessments.



The Wellbeing Team



Darryl



Kate



Tanya



Mike



Greg



Naomi

THE PROGRAMS

As part of the overall wellbeing of the school and its students, we also commission outside agencies to run programs. Programs can involve students from all year levels or their families. We try to provide a variety of programs to benefit the wellbeing teachings at the school. Programs engage students in an interesting and interactive way and cover topics like parenting, emotional health, peer supports, life skills etc. We must give a huge thanks to Anglicare, ECHO, St Lukes and Cardinia Shire Youth Services. Without these essential community services, the programs could not run.

Parenting Teens Program

Anglicare joined with ESC to facilitate a Parenting teens program and it was an enormous success. 18 parents came every Tuesday evening for 5 weeks to get some further information on parenting. This is likely to run again so keep a lookout in the newsletter and Compass news feeds. Some of the topics discussed were

- Understanding the teenage brain
- Getting your teenagers to listen without having to yell
- Dealing with anger
- Building relationships with teens
- Strategies that work

These are quotes from some of the participants.

- *Great course, helped me be more patient and understanding of my child's wants/needs, because really our wants and needs can change depending on the day.*
- *For me, I do feel more confident as a parent with the tools/guidelines learnt through the course.*
- *Yes, I thoroughly enjoyed every bit of it. I would definitely recommend to other parents. The main test was whether the kids felt a difference and the answer to this question was that it did make a difference. I now need to keep up with applying what I learnt.*
- *Great insight to the developing teenage brain*



Young Women's Group

We have been very lucky to have Cardinia Youth Services come every week to run a young women's group with 14 of our year 9 girls. Some of the topics they covered were:

- **Respectful relationships**
- **Consent and conflict resolution**
- **How do I feel Mind, body and soul**
- **Sexual health**



This group runs for 2 periods a week and is very well received- feedback we have received: *"The workers have good information, we all trust each other, it's fun, they are respectful"*

SAGA - Sexuality and Gender Acceptance

The SAGA groups meet every Friday lunch time - This social group is for people who identify as LGBTQI+ and allies.

In addition to meeting weekly to support each other, this group also organises events to raise awareness. SAGA celebrated IDOHAT day at ESC with a sausage sizzle, music and competitions and SAGA also ran lunch time activities during Diversity week. Some comments from the students involved with the SAGA groups

Feedback from participants

- *It is a safe space*
- *We have friends there*
- *Everyone is really cool*



In-school mentoring

We are very pleased to be teaming up with ECHO again to run the in-school peer support / mentoring program. This program matches senior school and junior school students together to work on a project. All students benefit from this positive peer friendship, they receive encouragement and can be inspired by those further along school's journey. We hope to provide the students with opportunities to learn new skills, develop peer support, increase leadership potential and succeed in building positive relationships both now at school and in the future. We also provide individual mentoring with some of our students and adult members of the community.

This program has only just begun, but the feedback has been very positive.

"It's fun"

"It helps you conquer your insecurities and helps develop social skills"



Learning 4 Life

Every Friday, for the whole day, students take part in a Learning 4 Life program. The program is designed to re-engage students into school life while providing them opportunities to learn new skills that they can take away and use for the rest of their life. The day starts with a team breakfast and then the group get to work. This term they have made tools that they will need in order to make larger woodwork projects during term three. The team decide as a group what they will make in term three, with the premise that it is something that the whole school can use. Ideas such as lunch benches, BBQ area's, communal seating area's. We look forward to supporting the Learning 4 Life class as they embark on building their own resilience and communication skills along side building some well needed furniture for the whole school. The class runs for 6 months and students are invited to attend. The next group will be enrolled at the end of term four.



Student focus

is a lunchtime program run on Fridays by ECHO Youth and Family Services. It provides a safe, fun and warm environment for any student to come and spend time. The program consists of a range of fun games that students can either participate in or watch, depending on what they are comfortable doing.



PASE (Personal and Social Education)

How do we ensure we are proactive in wellbeing across the college? One way in 2017 is our new whole school wellbeing program PASE. Through this program, which runs Mondays for 30 minutes, we deliver key information to students to support their social and emotional wellbeing. The homegroup teacher delivers the content as this is an important part of the bond between the homegroup teacher and the student. In term 2 the year 7s learned skills in decision making and cyber safety and coming up in Term 3 for example, the year 8s will be looking at teamwork, resilience and growth mindset whilst the year 10s will be looking at a community intervention program that aims to reduce adolescent alcohol use.

Some feedback from students about PASE is "It teaches us things that we don't get to learn in normal subjects, It's fun, It is good to get to know the homegroup teacher better"

Farm School

Woori Yallock Farm School is located at the site of the original Woori Yallock Primary School which was converted to an educational farm setting in 1990. Farm School provides Personal Development and Leadership Programs for secondary students in the area. We are lucky to combine with 2 other schools to send a group of students each week.

While the program varies according to the requirements of each group, weather conditions and the time of year, the following will generally apply.

- Most days begin with a 'Team Meeting' to discuss the activities for the day
- Most days will include students being involved in a combination of class work and hands-on activities.
- Some days will involve excursions away from the Farm School.

CHILD SAFE

Emerald Secondary College is dedicated to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. As part of the Victorian Government's commitment to instigating the recommendations of the Betrayal of Trust report, ESC has implemented the Child Safe Policy. This ensures that ESC and everyone who works at the school will be proactive in ensuring the safety of all students. The policy ensures that all students know what it means to be safe and know they have a right to be safe. The policy and procedures put in place strengthen the zero policy for abuse approach we take at ESC. We want to ensure you we know how to keep your children safe at school, and how we'd like you to support us in continuing with this.

We as a school, want you to know that

- Everyone connected to our school can help children be safe.
- We have zero tolerance for any abuse of children.
- There are clear boundaries about how adults in our school community may interact with the children here.
- The new child safe standards go further than child protection arrangements did in the past.
- Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility. Different people at our school have different roles and responsibilities for ensuring children's safety

- Other people using our school facilities will be asked about their child safety arrangements as a condition of using our facilities if they involve children enrolled at the school (or children can reasonably be expected to be present while their staff or other adults are at the school).

Students can find this information displayed in every classroom, the information is clearly written so all students and their families can see some facts and advice on where to get help if needed. The writing is simple and easy for people of all ages to understand. These posters explain the rights of the child eg –

- Everyone has the right to feel safe and be protected from abuse
- No-one is allowed to threaten you, hurt you, or touch you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable, unsafe or afraid.
- Every relationship should be respectful
- You don't have to deal with abuse on your own. Talk to a trusted adult. Teachers and other adults at your school can support you to get help

Teaching Students with Disabilities

At Emerald Secondary College we continue to ensure our staff are given opportunities for professional development in teaching and supporting students with disabilities. This year we have worked closely with Education Consultant **Jo Prestia** to help develop modified learning tasks to enable students to access the quality education they are entitled to.



- BEd (Arts & Crafts),
- Master Educational Leadership
- Post Grad in Education Research

Thesis: The nature of the relationship between teachers and teacher aides.

- PhD student - Monash University, Clayton

Thesis working title: Optimal learning for students with learning disabilities: Building relationships between teachers and Learning

Support Officers.

"I believe everyone learns in their own special way, we must endeavour to find what this is and then facilitate the learning using strategies that support these preferences".

DECODING INTERVENTION CLASSES - TERM THREE.

Children who have difficulty with reading words, especially when they appear in a sentence context will be taking part in Decoding Intervention Classes during term three. Children who struggle to decode make frequent word-identification errors and make a higher percentage of mistakes when reading connected sentences than when reading word lists. Often they are inconsistent in their reading behaviours such as correctly reading it one time and then missing it the next. Over time, these ineffective reading strategies have persisted and therefore impacted on your child's reading fluency.

Supporting Students with Disabilities

Our PSD Coordinator Katrina Benoiton, along with Support Officer Dory Stephens, ensures all our funded students (and some non-funded students) are guided in an array of avenues. Support comes in many ways and is not always through Learning Support Officers. At Emerald Secondary College we regularly use Visiting Teachers, OT's, Speech Pathologists, Education Psychologists among other allied health professionals to ensure that the needs of the students are met. In the class room, subject teachers regularly comment on how invaluable our team of Learning Support Officers are:



"I cannot express how grateful I am to have Alex in the classroom. She really understands the learning needs of the individual student and has really supported their modified learning"

LOOKING FORWARD TO TERM 3

Parent / Community nights

We are going to continue to support our students in every way we can. The programs continuing are PASE, Farm School, SAGA, In School mentoring, School Focus lunch time activities, Learning 4 Life with some new programs starting in semester 2.

Smart Gen

Tuesday August 15th We have a wonderful opportunity for parents to come to an information evening, run by a group of dedicated students, to learn about underage drinking. Topics covered will be

- Your legal rights with your child and alcohol
- How to talk with your children about alcohol
- How to make informed decisions
- Statistics on "everyone is doing it"

Dads Matter Too

Wednesday 15th November

This is a one night session for dads only run by Anglicare (off of the success of our Parenting Teens sessions).