

WELCOME

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Parental roles in the implementation of the NSSF and building positive relationships in schools

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Vision Statement

“All Australian schools are safe and supportive environments.”

(DEST 2003)

Note: See attached notes pages for additional notes related to the slides in this presentation. These can be accessed by downloading or copying the presentation and using ‘normal view’.

Two reasons for looking at the role of parents

- Required by the National Safe Schools Framework (McGrath & Stanley 2006)
- The whole school community needs to be involved if there is to be effective and **sustained change** (Field & Carroll 2006; McGrath 2006: Rigby 2006: Rigby & Bagshaw 2006))

NSSF Guiding principles

1. Australian schools affirm the right of all school community members to feel safe at school
2. Australian schools promote care, respect and cooperation, and value diversity.
3. Australian schools implement policies, programs and processes to nurture a safe and supportive school environment.

4. Australian schools recognise that quality leadership is an essential element that underpins the creation of a safe and supportive school environment
5. Australian schools develop and implement policies and programs through processes that engage the whole school community
6. Australian schools ensure that roles and responsibilities of all members of the school community in promoting a safe and supportive school environment are explicit, clearly understood and disseminated

7. Australian schools recognise the importance of pre-service and ongoing professional development in creating a safe and supportive school environment.
8. Australian schools have a responsibility to provide opportunities for students to learn through the formal curriculum the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed for positive relationships.
9. Australian schools focus on policies that are proactive and oriented towards prevention and intervention.

10. Australian schools regularly monitor and evaluate their policies and programmes so that evidence-based practice supports decisions and improvements.
11. Australian schools take action to protect children from all forms of abuse and neglect. (DEST 2003)

The NSSF – Key elements of good practice

1. School values, ethos, culture, structures and student welfare
2. Establishment of agreed policies, programs and procedures
3. Provision of education and training to school staff, students and **parents**.
4. Managing incidents of abuse and victimisation
5. Providing support for students
6. Working closely with **parents**. (DEST, 2003)

a whole-of-school approach

...is much more likely to be successful than single-factor interventions. “...the conceptualisation of the school community in a holistic way, consisting of students, teachers, parents and other stakeholders, combined with the acceptance by management of their responsibility to achieve and maintain a harmonious and caring school environment”

(Homel, n.d. cited in DEST, n.d.)

Research method

- Seeking evidence of parent involvement in schools to reduce bullying and harassment.
 - Search using the .sa.edu.au domain and 'bullying' to access and identify relevant documents on South Australian school websites (August 2007).
 - Analysis of relevant passages from these documents.

Research data / findings

- Newsletters
- Web pages
- Context statements
- Annual reports
- Site learning plans

School newsletters

- Four primary schools promoting the NSS Week Parent Forum (held in Adelaide in 2007)
- Two schools informing parents about the work being commenced in the school with the NSSF and inviting parents to join the committee.

- Information for parents about bullying and harassment including:
 - Item by the Youth and Family Worker about school policy and highlighting a worksheet to complete at home with their child
 - Article on student wellbeing
 - Information about a Parent Evening

Web pages

- Three private schools have excellent information about bullying and harassment
 - Tyndale College has a page for the NSSF. Information includes a brochure on bullying and harassment.
 - Cardjin College Safe School page has links to information that can be accessed on aspects of students being safe at school

- Sacred Heart College website has a Pastoral Care section and work on Restorative Justice which ‘...relies on staff, students and parents working together to get the best possible results for the students.’ There is information on bullying and advice for those seeing others being bullied.

Context statements

- 4 schools include mention of the NSSF or student wellbeing as a priority or a key school policy
- Mulga Street PS context statement – has a heading ‘What we teach’ that includes NSSF.
 - School vision – *Mulga Street will be a safe and supportive environment*

Annual Report

- Seaford Rise PS reported that wellbeing and the NSSF would be priorities for 2007. An anti-bullying policy was passed by School Council in 2005.
- An area school reported in 2006 that for National Safe Schools Week there was a focus on bullying in classes R–12. 2007 wellbeing a focus for Year 6-9 students.

Site Learning Plans

- Balaklava PS (2006) includes a strategy entitled 'Engagement and Wellbeing' where the NSSF is listed as one component. Subheadings:
 - What we already know about student well-being
 - Key strategies to improve student well-being
 - How we will know we have improved student well being?
 - Our agreed targets

- Kapunda HS – 2004-6 plan had ‘Student Well Being – Implement processes to ensure values are owned by students, staff and parents’.

With the help of schools parents can support
and extend the work of building positive
relationships (Field & Carroll 2006)

Conclusions

- The literature tells us that parents are important in assisting students to engage with the social learning that is required for positive relationships
- This survey of school websites suggests that parents can be much more involved in the work of building positive relationships in schools.

References

- Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training. (2003). *Implementation Manual for The National Safe Schools Framework*
<http://www.dest.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/1549490C-8CD1-4343-9571-9751122D842C/1638/implementationmanual.pdf> (Accessed 30/10/07)
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- Field, E., & Carroll, P. (2006). Effective ways to work with parents. In H. McGrath & T. Noble (Eds.), *Bullying Solutions: Evidence-based Approaches to Bullying in Australian Schools* (pp. 209-225). Frenchs Forest, NSW: Pearson Longman.
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- Rigby, K. (2006). What international research tells us about bullying. In H. McGrath & T. Noble (Eds.), *Bullying solutions: Evidence-based Approaches to Bullying in Australian Schools* (pp. 283). Frenchs Forest, NSW: Pearson Longman.
- Rigby, K., & Bagshaw, D. (2006). Using educational drama and bystander training to counteract bullying. In H. McGrath & T. Noble (Eds.), *Bullying solutions: Evidence-based Approaches to Bullying in Australian Schools* (pp. 133). Frenchs Forest, NSW: Pearson Longman.

Websites referred to:

Cardijn College Safe Schools page

<http://www.cardijn.sa.edu.au/modules/content/index.php?id=134>

Sacred Heart College Pastoral Care page

<http://www.shcms.sa.edu.au/pastoralcare.htm>