Hi there, I am the part-time Student Counsellor, working alongside staff to support the needs of our students and families. Together we aim to provide a safe and positive learning environment. I will see children individually and in groups for discussions on various topics – so stay tuned for my page!

If you think your child may benefit from some additional support please do not hesitate to contact me or they can drop a note in the “chatterbox” in their classroom.

What is Mindfulness Meditation and is it worthwhile??

IN RECENT YEARS, WE ARE HEARING LOTS ABOUT MINDFULNESS MEDITATION AND ITS USE IN THE TREATMENT OF STRESS, RESILIENCE, ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION. HIGHLY REGARDED INSTITUTIONS HAVE PROVEN IN CLINICAL STUDIES THE POSITIVE IMPACTS OF MINDFULNESS MEDITATION. SO WHY NOT TEACH OUR CHILDREN?

Mindfulness involves learning to direct our attention to our experiences as it is unfolding, moment by moment, with open-minded curiosity and acceptance, rather than worrying about what has happened or might happen. Research shows that mindfulness training increases connectivity in the frontal lobe of the brain, which is linked to improved attention, memory processing and decision making abilities.

Mindfulness training involves tuning in to internal and external experiences with curiosity. With training this increases children’s ability to self regulate their emotions, especially difficult emotions such as fear and anger, through breathing and other grounding techniques.

Mindfulness has been shown to improve empathy or the ability to understand what another person is thinking or feeling, which improves children’s awareness of others and helps them to build positive relationships. It has also been shown to increase positive mental health reducing the severity of depression, anxiety and ADHD in children.

Importantly, Mindfulness builds resilience by giving children a real “strategy” to cope better with anxiety and stress and engage more openly with themselves, others and the world around them.

This week I have spent some time with the year 4’s and introduced them to a Mindful Meditation called the “Bubble Journey” – The children came in small groups, we lay down on some cushions and were guided to listen to our breathing, focus and count 10 deep breathes. We then imagined a bubble travelling through our bodies which was warm and calming. We rated how we felt after and talked about how important it is to have strategies to call on when we feel worried or stressed and how meditation may be on option, among many such as kicking the footy, writing down our thoughts, talking to someone who can help us problem solve, and many more. The children enjoyed the experience and noted how much calmer they felt following the exercise. We discussed how mindfulness is a skill we may like to practice and to use in certain times. The children all felt great afterwards and we shared how the experience differed for each of us, e.g. the colours of our bubbles.

I encouraged the children to go home and share what they learnt with their families – a great thing to do together! The app “Smiling Mind’ www.smilingmind.com.au is free and provides many more guided meditations for children of all ages and interests. Download it today and together you and your family can begin a Mindfulness Journey.

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