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ISSUE 04



# STUDENT WELLBEING PARENT BULLETIN

Mount Waverley Secondary College

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*Gratitude*

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# PURPOSE

At Mount Waverley Secondary College we value a holistic approach when it comes to supporting the needs of our students. It's integral to the wellbeing of our students that families are supported in their role to nurture their young person. The Parent Bulletin is authored by Aisha Paternott and Jason Mann - Mental Health Practitioners at Mount Waverley Secondary College, and is our way of connecting with the parents of our students. We hope to offer you general parenting advice, greater awareness of what is happening at Mount Waverley Secondary College and provide links to support agencies from the community that offer a range of structured programs and supports to assist families.

We are continually thinking about topics that we may include in these bulletins and information to share. We would also love for you to have a say in what we include in the bulletin. So if there are any topics you would like us to cover please feel free to contact Aisha - [pai@mwsc.vic.edu.au](mailto:pai@mwsc.vic.edu.au)

# ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

# PRACTITIONERS (MHP)

Mental Health Practitioners provide direct counselling support and other early intervention and health promotion services for students, as well as coordinating support for students with complex needs. In counselling sessions, the MHP supports your child by directly, offering feedback, strategies and tools to help your child manage their concerns. Mental health practitioners provide short term interventions for students with mild to moderate mental health needs and liaise with internal and external services where students need more intensive supports. MHPs also supports your child by providing feedback, strategies and tools to relevant school staff to improve your child's learning and development. MHPs may also run small group activities with students experiencing the same or similar concerns. Students are referred to the MHP program through Paul Graham (Student Support and Resource Manager). Paul can be contacted at [gpd@mwsc.vic.edu.au](mailto:gpd@mwsc.vic.edu.au)



COMMUNITY | CHOICE | ENGAGEMENT

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# GRATITUDE

*Aisha Paternott  
& Jason Mann  
(Mental Health Practitioners)*

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## What is Gratitude?

Gratitude (otherwise known as thankfulness or gratefulness) can be described as a positive feeling of appreciation towards the things and the people we have in our lives. Gratitude as a social emotion, really helps us to connect with people and interact with people in such a positive way. More than that however, we need to think of gratitude as an action, as to be really effective, gratitude needs to be given, shared and absorbed. Individually, gratitude can be the act of pausing to reflect and notice the things that we bring us joy that we sometimes may take for granted.

These things may include:

- Having a roof over our heads
- Having three meals a day
- Drinking clean water
- The ability to move our bodies
- Access to education and health services
- Our family, friends and loved ones

## Research On Gratitude:

Research has proven that practicing gratitude is an effective way to connect with meaningful memories, feel happier and be more satisfied within your life.

Scientist Georg Simmel has called gratitude “the moral memory of mankind” as it can strengthen bonds between humans. With isolation and loneliness being significant risk factors for developing depression, anything that we do to promote social and emotional connection is valuable. Gratitude helps people refocus

on what they have instead of what they lack. There is also some research indicating that people who utilise gratitude are also less critical of themselves, which is again another risk factor for the development of anxiety and depression. And, although it may feel contrived at first, this mental state grows stronger with use and practice.

When considering how gratitude shows up in our brains, it was found that gratitude causes synchronized activation in multiple brain regions and lights up parts of the brain’s reward pathways and the hypothalamus.

In short, gratitude can boost the neurotransmitter serotonin and activate the brain stem to produce dopamine which is our brain’s pleasure chemical.

Therefore, the more we think positive, grateful thoughts, the healthier and happier we feel.

## How can gratitude be practiced as a family?

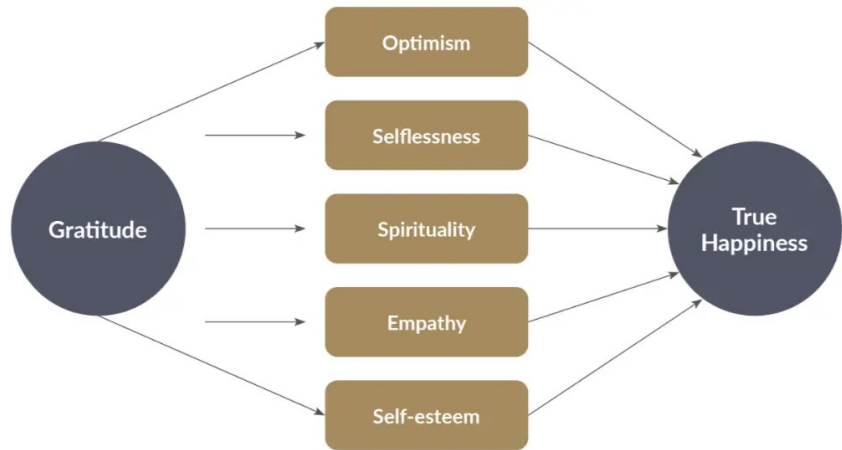
- Daily gratitude sharing with each other
- Gratitude jar or board
- Act of kindness towards others
- Writing thank you notes or expressions of thanks
- Counting your blessings
- Praying together
- Meditate: can be done through apps e.g. Smiling Mind

## Receiving Gratitude

While it can be difficult at times for us to express gratitude due to emotions such as fear getting in the way or feelings of vulnerability, it can also be hard for us to receive the gratitude that people share with us. Hearing that people are grateful for what we have done for them can itself be uncomfortable and we need to be careful with how we approach such situations. There may be a tendency to say something like “It doesn’t matter”, “It’s no big deal” or “Don’t get all emotional on me now!” however these responses tend to shut the



conversation down when we want to encourage people to be open, thankful, and reflective. We need to be able to teach our children (and each other) how to give gratitude and how to receive it in order to amplify the positive impact on our wellbeing.



# GRATITUDE JOURNAL

## **Recognising gratefulness in my life**

1. Things in the world and in my life that I'm grateful for and appreciate.
2. Things about others (family, friends, coworkers, pets etc.) that I'm grateful for and appreciate.
3. Things about myself (qualities, strengths, values, good deeds, etc.) that I'm grateful for and appreciate.

## **Expressing Gratitude to Others**

1. Who did I express my gratitude to?
2. What I said or wrote?
3. What happened?

Greenberger, D., & Padesky, C. A. (2016). Mind over mood: change how you feel by changing the way you think. Second edition. New York, NY, The Guilford Press.

# WHAT'S HAPPENING ON CAMPUS?

## Senior Campus

On the senior campus we've had a busy start to the term with Red Frogs presenting to our Year 12 students on how to keep safe whilst at 'Schoolies' and the ways that they can support our students if they find themselves in need of assistance. It was pleasing to know the wide variety of areas that Red Frogs cover including supporting students who are attending Bali to celebrate the end of their schooling journey.

We also had Brainstorm Productions present to our Year 9 students with the drama 'The Hurting Game'. Through the performance, our students were provided with strategies to increase their resilience, how to engage in help seeking behaviours in particular when it comes to online safety.

Our Year 10 students participated in their wellbeing/careers day earlier this term, engaging in workshops by REACH, listening to alumni speak regarding their careers and hearing Daniel Merza talk about how to get the 5 monkey's off your back in order to engage in life fully.

We have also started to plan for our Year 8 students transitioning over to the Senior Campus in 2023 with a member of the Student Wellbeing team attending the Junior Campus to meet students who may benefit from assistance in making this transition.

## Junior Campus

On the Junior Campus, there has been a lot of planning around Year 8 transition preparation for the senior campus. Naturally, this can be an exciting yet uneasy time for both students and their families. Please feel free to reach out to any education or wellbeing staff during this time (alternatively, please see Issue 3 of the Parent Bulletin on Transition that was published in September).



Daniel Merza: Get the monkey's off your back

As October was Mental Health Awareness Month, the wellbeing team on the Junior Campus ran GEM workshops for the students. During this week, many Year 8 students ventured to King Lake for Year 8 camp. While this was an extremely wet and muddy time, it was a wonderful experience of bonding and stepping outside our comfort zones. Having gone on the camp, I felt extremely proud of all the students who showed resilience and strength in completing challenges and comradery towards each other. A lot of gratitude was also practiced in reflecting on the things that we sometimes take for granted at home... (like a hot shower and a comfy bed!)

Lunchtime groups continue to run the wellness zone (LA61). The Respect Club runs on a Wednesday and Year 7 social club runs on a Thursday. If you think any of these clubs are of interest to your child, please encourage them to attend.

Last Friday, a couple of Year 8 students showcased their martial arts skills and led a group at lunch time for students and staff that were interested in participating. This was a very successful program as it highlighted students leadership skills and some of the intentions behind martial arts practice being to demonstrate mindfulness and positive thinking.

# WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE COMMUNITY?

## All Aboard Skateboarding Session:

Learn the basics and build skills in skateboarding sessions with the Victorian Skateboard Association. Skateboards, helmet and protective equipment provided.

### Sunday 20th November

Central Reserve Glen Waverley Skate Park  
437 Springvale Rd, Glen Waverley

Session 1: Ages 5-12

10.00am - 11.00am

To book: <https://www.trybooking.com/CCR UW>

Session 2: Ages 13-18

11.00am - 12.00pm

To book: <https://www.trybooking.com/CCTMN>

Sessions are limited to the first 25 registrants for each group.



## Monash Carols by Candlelight Sunday 4th December 5:30pm - 9:30pm

Start practicing your carols and jingling those sleigh bells: the much-loved Monash Carols is back after a two-year hiatus. Pack a picnic rug and head down to Jells Park on Sunday 4 December to celebrate the festive season!

The Pre-show activities and entertainment kick off at 5.30pm with one of Australia's most entertaining children's groups, Team Dream and Oakleigh Primary School Choir.

The Main Concert gets underway at 7.30pm and features a stellar line-up including the Monash Carols Band (comprising the Monash Concert Band and Oakleigh Brass Band), Monash University Chorale Society and guest soloists.

Monash local and award-winning cabaret artist, Melissa Langton will compere the evening and perform alongside artists including Bethany Fisher, Jael Wena, Cassie McIvor, Aidan Calafiore, Sienna Ketelyn and Annie Jones to name a few.

There will be a special appearance by Santa and a spectacular fireworks finale at 9.15pm.

The Monash Carols by Candlelight is a drug, smoke and alcohol free family-friendly event; bring a torch, comfortable shoes, picnic rug and warm clothes. Please leave your four-legged friends at home as the fireworks can cause distress to animals. Parking is limited, so plan your journey ahead.



# Spotlight on...



**The Humble Mission** is a not-for-profit charity who aims to build bridges in the community by creating an eco- system of kindness across Melbourne. Like bees travelling between flowers to distribute pollen, The Humble Mission reaches out to generous individuals and organisations for donations and support that is shared as kindness to where it's needed the most.

Every Saturday, our Relief by The River service distributes the weekly essentials, including meals, groceries, toiletries, health services, clothes and more for the homeless, disadvantaged, and rough sleepers around the Melbourne CBD. These items go to our friends who need them most. Plus, we help individuals with other needs in any way we can outside our Saturday Service. This service aims to create a sense of camaraderie amongst disadvantaged communities by bringing them together and creating support networks to build and draw on to cope and create meaning in times of need and crisis.

## How to get involved:

The Relief by the River service relies solely on volunteers to distribute meals and other essentials. If you and your family would like to get involved, please visit [www.thehumblemission.com](http://www.thehumblemission.com) and click 'Get Involved.'

## Where can I find more information?

If you would like to learn more about the Humble Mission and all the wonderful work they do, please visit their website: <https://www.thehumblemission.com> and follow them on social media: Facebook – The Humble Mission,





# A WORD FROM OUR COLLEGE NURSES

## A QUICK REMINDER

If your young person is feeling under the weather for any reason please think twice before sending them to school. Sending a young person to school whilst symptomatic places their health and the health of others at risk. Let's act together in keeping the community safe by ensuring that we stay home when unwell.

## HEALTH IS GOOD FOR EVERYONE

Immunisation is a simple, safe and effective way of protecting your child against harmful diseases that can cause serious health problems and sometimes death and a way to help your child stay healthy.

We are grateful that in Australia our children can access a Secondary School Immunisation Program which is free.

Health advice regarding immunisations recommends students receive the following:

### Year 7

- Diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (whooping cough) (one dose)
- Human papillomavirus (HPV) (2 doses 6 months apart).

### Year 10

- Meningococcal A,C,W,Y (one dose).

Due to COVID-19 related interruptions to school-based learning, there are a number of students in years 7 to 12 who may have missed these important vaccines. This puts students at an increased risk of illness.

If your child missed out on their school-based vaccinations, please speak to your GP or local council immunisation service about how they can catch up.

To check if your child is due for any vaccines, refer to their immunisation history statement on the Australian Immunisation Register, using your MyGov account.

If your child is aged over 14, they may need to access their immunisation history statement themselves, through their own MyGov account or the Medicare mobile app.

To keep the body in good health is a duty,  
otherwise we shall not be able to keep our  
mind strong and clear.

- Buddha

# MOUNT WAVERLEY SECONDARY COLLEGE STUDENT WELLBEING MODEL



## YOUR WELLBEING TEAM CONTACTS

**Paul Graham**

Student Support and Resources Manager

**Kerri Haworth**

Student Wellbeing Coordinator - Senior Campus

**Danielle Mott**

Student Wellbeing Coordinator - Junior Campus

**Aisha Paternott**

Mental Health Practitioner - Junior Campus

**Jason Mann**

Mental Health Practitioner - Senior Campus

**Margaret Taylor**

Inclusion and Individual Needs Coordinator

**Maria Disley, Jane Horrabin, Kathy Ragavan,  
Claire Ferguson & Maria Calafiore**

Inclusion Support Staff

**Jody Clooney, Caz Coady & Stephanie Tang**

School Nurses

